Week ending December 23 1950 Every Thursday Threepence

John Bull

HOW AMETHYST'S CAPTAIN PARLEYED WITH CHINESE COMMUNISTS

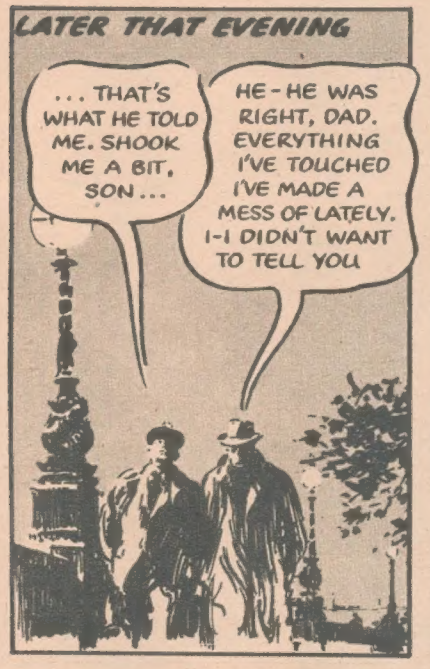
What had come over my son?

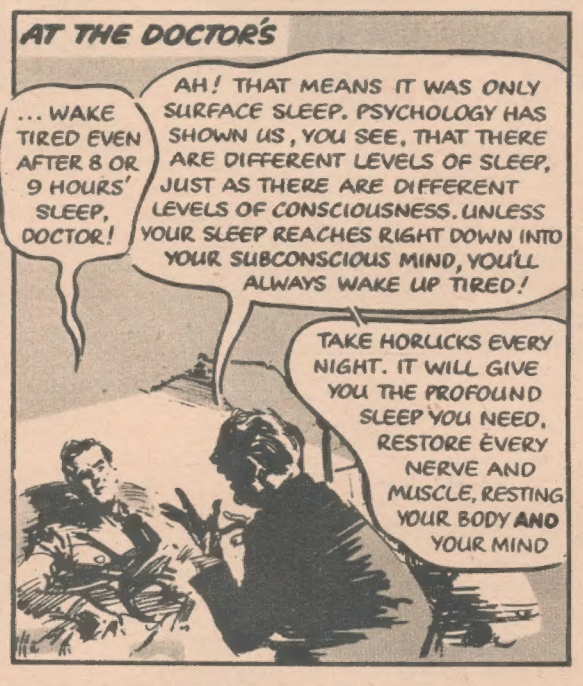
HOW ARE THE SCHOOL PLANS GOING, PETER? MUST BE IN BY NEXT WEDNESDAY
NEARLY FINISHED, MR. BLAKE
THINKS
NOT TOO HAPPY... SEEM TO HAVE LOST MY TOUCH...SO TIRED LATELY

MONDAY MORNING
THESE ARE TERRIBLY DISAPPOINTING, PETER. I'LL SUBMIT THEM, BUT THEY HAVEN'T A CHANCE OF GETTING THE CONTRACT

THAT EVENING-
PETER'S FATHER CALLS
LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOUR SCHOOL PLANS AT THE EXHIBITION, PETER. HOW ARE THEY GOING? JOE BLAKE PLEASED?
OH-OH, YES, DAD. THEY'RE DOING FINE!

THIS PETER'S STUFF, JOE? BUT THEY'RE AWFUL. HE CAN DO BETTER THAN THIS!
I KNOW, TOM. CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S COME OVER THE BOY- NO LIFE IN HIS WORK AT ALL


LATER THAT EVENING
... THAT'S WHAT HE TOLD ME. SHOOK ME A BIT, SON...
HE-HE WAS RIGHT, DAD. EVERYTHING I'VE TOUCHED I'VE MADE A MESS OF LATELY. I-I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU


AT THE DOCTOR'S
... WAKE TIRED EVEN AFTER 8 OR 9 HOURS' SLEEP, DOCTOR!
AH! THAT MEANS IT WAS ONLY SURFACE SLEEP. PSYCHOLOGY HAS SHOWN US, YOU SEE, THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SLEEP, JUST AS THERE ARE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS. UNLESS YOUR SLEEP REACHES RIGHT DOWN INTO YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND, YOU'LL ALWAYS WAKE UP TIRED!
TAKE HORLICKS EVERY NIGHT. IT WILL GIVE YOU THE PROFOUND SLEEP YOU NEED, RESTORE EVERY NERVE AND MUSCLE, RESTING YOUR BODY AND YOUR MIND

PETER-GUESS WHAT!
YOU WON IT, WOODS, YOU WON THE PRIZE. AND WE GET THE CONTRACTS!
CONGRATULATIONS, PETER!
THINKS CONGRATULATIONS TO HORLICKS, TOO

WHEN JOE BLAKE TOLD ME WHAT HE DID IT WORRIED ME, FOR I KNEW PETER WAS REALLY GOOD. IT WAS THAT TIREDNESS GETTING HIM DOWN, AND THE DOCTOR HAD THE ANSWER WHEN HE TOLD PETER THAT HIS SLEEP WAS ONLY SURFACE SLEEP. HORLICKS SOON HAD HIM ON HIS FEET AGAIN. HE WON THE GOLD MEDAL AWARD ANYWAY! HE'S ALL FOR HORLICKS NOW

HORLICKS

EDITORIAL

Take stock of our way of life this Christmas

THE WORLD HAS been too much with us lately.

It is a hard, practically minded and anxious world, beset by wars and rumours of war, and the struggle everywhere to make ends meet.

All its serious talk is of economics and armaments, of production and taxation, of dollars and tons and manpower and tanks. And for light relief, quite naturally, it turns to large-scale sport, entertainment and gambling.

In this materialistic maelstrom we keep striving onwards—because to strive is a human instinct. We strive to produce goods, to grapple with problems and terrors, and to find consolation in amusement.

But it is a rather blind striving. We are in danger of losing sight of what we are striving for, and therefore of losing our reward before we have had time to win it.

This is our problem, and for it the Christian Churches have a special solution. They offer, to those who are prepared to listen, a goal and a method.

But the solution is not necessarily a religious one in entirety. It starts on the common ground between all churches and all civilized people outside the churches. It involves realizing the fact that all our present-day materialistic striving is really for the sake of a way of life. . . .

This Christmas is a good time to take stock of that way of life, and to remind ourselves of its value and importance. For, if we forgot, there would be little point in striving.

WHAT we are working and striving for is civilization. This is something more than a code of rules or a collection of gadgets. Scientific and material progress has little to do with it. A civilized Englishman of today has more in common with an Athenian of 2,000 years ago than with a German Nazi or an Asiatic Communist—though both the latter may be accustomed to the best modern plumbing, motor cars and radio.

What we call civilization has been a long time growing—more than 2,000 years. Perhaps it really began in Ancient Greece, where the Athenians developed what we still call by their name for it, democracy, which means "the people's rule."

To those beginnings the Romans added law and order, expressed in a great system of laws which is still the basis of our modern jurisprudence.

And to these foundations, later ages added the humanitarian idea—a preference for kindness rather than cruelty, a belief that all men have equal rights to justice and liberty. So that today we are the fortunate heirs of a civilization based on intelligence, law and order, liberty and kindness.

All these ingredients are intangible. They must survive as habits of the mind and spirit—or they do not survive at all.

It is at once the weakness and the strength of our civilization that it is of the mind rather than of the body.

Weakness, because ideas cannot immediately withstand tanks in battle. Weakness, too, because we ourselves can slip back into barbarism merely by forgetting our ideas—or ideals, which is really the same thing.

Strength, because no conqueror or tyrant can really kill an idea, though he may persecute, torture or kill those who possess it.

HUMAN history is one long record of struggle between the barbarians and the civilizers. There are always people and nations who reject the higher values of civilization. And so perpetual battle must be waged to protect it from the attacks of the beasts who are always ready to spring.

Today, we comfort ourselves with the knowledge that our civilization cannot be extinguished.

But already, in many countries, we have seen its first principles denied to millions of our fellow human beings; and its ideals driven underground—back into the hearts and minds of men who are no longer free to say or do what they think and feel is right. Their voices are silenced; their actions restricted by fear.

It is the liberty to *practise* our ideals that is now in peril. We have to understand that we can no longer take for granted the permanence of our way of life, that if we want to continue to live the life towards which the Western peoples have striven through so many centuries—and which we hoped this century might bring to fullness — we must back our desire with strength of arms and strength of will.

That is the challenge of this fateful Christmas of 1950. And to all who fully understand the nature of the challenge, there can be no possible doubt of our answer.

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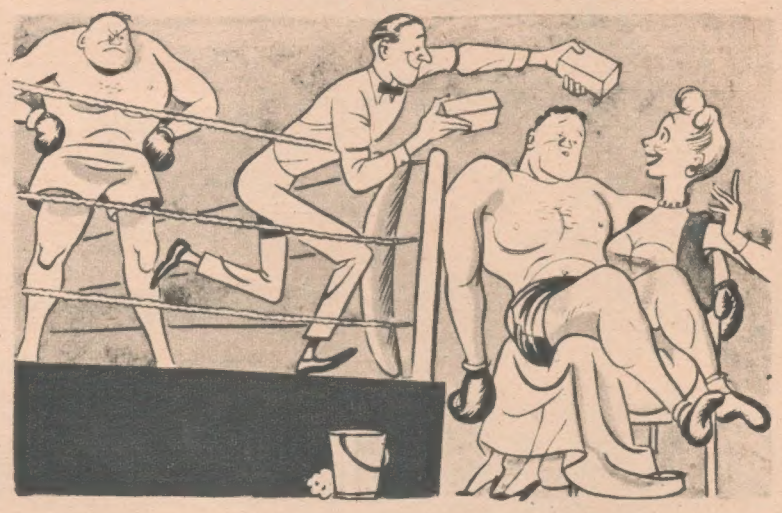

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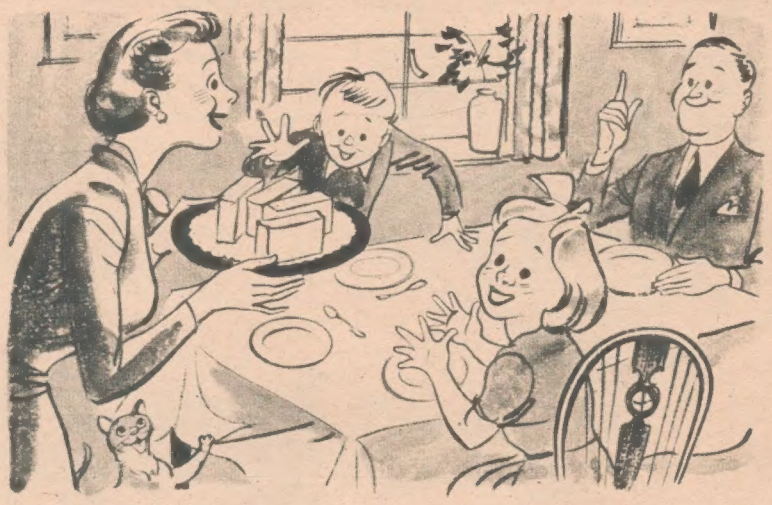

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FREE SPEECH

His heart was sound after all

FOR TWO YEARS I suffered panic-stricken, sleepless nights. I had all the "symptoms" of heart disease—breathlessness, palpitations, dizziness, swollen feet, tiredness.

A ten-minute chat with a specialist changed all that. He convinced me that my heart was sound, but was hindered by my perpetual worrying about it, as was pointed out in "Now You Know" (November 25). From that time on I was completely fit. And, incidentally, I no longer laugh at jokes about Army "medicals," for it was at one of these that the specialist saw me.

What causes these "imaginary" illnesses? From bitter experience I can suggest one cause—quarrelling parents. If only they realized the cost to their children.—GUNNER, Hants.

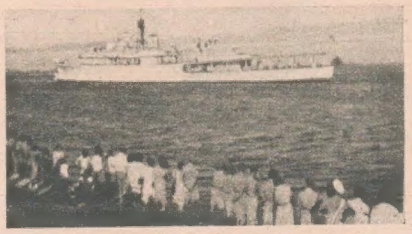
Children In The Road

AS ONE WHO GIVES occasional talks on safety first, I would go further than Mrs. D. F. L., Newport, who urges people to see children across busy roads ("Free Speech," December 2). I would make it an offence to allow young children to be in a busy road unaccompanied by an adult. Such roads should be scheduled. Children are incapable of realizing danger. — SUPERINTENDENT L. J. QUELCH, Oxford City Police, 39 Henley Avenue, Oxford.

. . . The sooner a child is taught to cross the road, the better for him. We live on the London—Birmingham Road. My nine-year-old son has been crossing it daily since he was five. Before she was even three my daughter was given daily instruction on how to cross.—E. LEECH, 332 Warwick Road, Banbury.

Amethyst's Return

JOHN BULL'S SERIAL OF Lawrence Earl's book, *Yangtse Incident*, brings to mind the day in October, 1949, when



"Amethyst" at Suez: Cpl. Mercer's photo

my wife and I, together with hundreds of soldiers, lined the banks of the Suez Canal with the intention of cheering H.M.S. *Amethyst* on her way home from the Far East. There was no cheering worth talking about, however, when the grand little ship went by. Our hearts were too full with the thoughts of her ordeal.—CORPORAL C. H. MERCER, Ripon, Yorks.

The Blind Gardener

ALLENE REILLY'S ARTICLE, "I Am A Blind Housewife" (JOHN BULL, November 25), recalled to me my father, who became totally blind at sixty-eight. He lived alone, cooked his own meals, lit fires, tidied up and did his own shopping. By means of a spring, two sticks and a string he planted straight rows of potatoes, cabbages, carrots, turnips and lettuce in his allotment garden. He seemed happier then than I had ever known him to be.—MRS. C. SHAW, 6 Laurel Grove, Armley, Leeds.

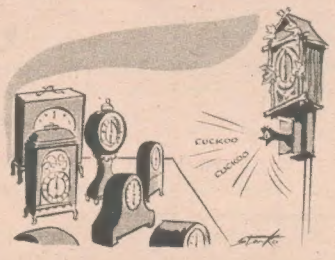
. . . In August, 1948, I travelled to Teignmouth in the same coach as Mr. and Mrs. Reilly. Her courage is beyond compare and I shall always remember how, when we stopped at Exeter, she asked for an ice-cream cornet and enjoyed eating it, just like a youngster. She was very confident and full of vitality.—A. COWLES, 364 Thimblemill Road, Smethwick, Staffs.

Pantos Of The Past

PANTOS THAT "our fathers never knew" are mentioned in Warren Harris's article (JOHN BULL, November 25). *Goody Two Shoes, Little Bo-Peep* and *Puss in Boots* are among those listed. I remember these being performed fifty and sixty years ago. I recall vividly the real sheep that followed Bo-Peep all over the stage during a production at the Grand Theatre, Cowcaddens, Glasgow. In those days we could hear the artists without their having to hang on to a microphone.—C. D. K., Alliance Avenue, Belfast.

Tick-tock—Crash!

STUDYING AN ARRAY OF CLOCKS in a shop window displaying modern designs, I noticed that all had bases for standing on sideboard or table. When I inquired, I was told that only electric clocks and one "wag-o'-the wall" in the shop could be hung up. Surely the



proper place for a clock is on the wall, where it can be seen from any angle, and not among the bric-a-brac of small modern rooms where an unlucky elbow may send it flying.—JAMES GRAHAM, 7 Eccles Terrace, West Allotment, Shiremoor, Northumberland.

Last Look At The Sun

I AGREE WE MUST have more coal (JOHN BULL Editorial, December 2). Some years ago I earned my living as a miner—and what a living! Semi-starvation, short time, Labour Exchange. Not knowing when or how we would come up, we used to take a last look at the sun before the chair lifted us, then dashed 2,000 feet underground.

It was pitiable to see the pit ponies as we harnessed them in the underground stables for an eight-hour shift: sometimes they had only just finished one shift. Many were blind and guided themselves by instinct, but they were almost human. In our pit we had a small donkey which dearly loved a drink of water out of a bottle tilted in the corner of his mouth and an inch of tobacco to chew.

Now wages and conditions have been revolutionized, but miners still leave the pits. I myself would never go underground again.—WALTER FOSTER, 12 Mill Street, Ilkeston, Derbyshire.

. . . Before Lord Hyndley talks of importing foreign miners, he should see that places are found for British miners. Two years ago I was transferred from the colliery where I worked at the coal face to another pit nearby. On reporting for work, I was told they had no places at the coal face and was signed on as a "miner awaiting a place" and given any odd jobs. I am still waiting. — MINER, Aberbaiden Colliery, near Bridgend, South Wales.

The Coal Board explains that there is a shortage of "odd-job" men as well as coal-face workers. If foreign miners were imported they would go to the back of the queue and would not displace British miners awaiting a place.

Breakfast-time Bachelors

I WAS REALLY TICKLED to read the letter from "Breakfast-time Bachelor" (JOHN BULL, November 25). After my marriage thirteen years ago, I told my husband that I could not bear to let him go out to work without my getting up to give him his breakfast. He retorted quickly that I should be tired of it in a week. You see, he had to be at work at 4 a.m., which meant getting up at 2.45 a.m.—MRS. ELIZABETH SMITH, 86 Thirlmere Road, Liverpool.

. . . My husband has time for a smoke and a good breakfast and five minutes beside a cheerful fire before he goes to work. Crawling out of bed at 2.30 a.m. is a bit of a nightmare, especially in winter. He does not regard it as a sacrifice. Why, then, should I?—MRS. G. A. SAUNDERS, 26 Lock Lane, Thorne, near Doncaster, Yorks.

. . . I am a breakfast-time bachelor's wife. These smug, virtuous wives make me sick. Surely a husband isn't entirely helpless.—MRS. I. DRURY, 6 Wycliffe Street, Ossett, Yorks.

What A Liftful!

WHO EVER SAW William Showell's December 2 cover scene (nine men and a girl in a lift) except in a film studio? Fancy putting so many tall, dark and handsome males in so limited a space! And fancy showing a man actually removing his hat in a lift because of a girl fellow passenger!—PATRICIA PAYNE, 17 North Avenue, West Worthing, Sussex.

. . . If I ever had the good fortune to be alone in a lift with such handsome men, I would remove *my* hat.—MRS. B. D. LESLIE, 14 Warley Avenue, Bradford Moor, Bradford.

John Bull welcomes readers' views, experiences and ideas for publication. A guinea is paid for every letter used. Mark the envelope "Free Speech" and make sure your full name and address are in the letter.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

"ALL parents have to go through this," says William Showell of his cover. "And as our three children grew up together you can guess the rumpus we went through on Christmas morning. Of course, that time's over. My son, Russell (21), is a journalist now. Avril (20), following in her father's footsteps, is an artist. Jill (18) is the actress of the family and plays in the Young Vic Company."

For these busy people—the new Rowntree's is RIGHT!

Busy men and women, with important work to do, have been among the very first to welcome, last thing at night, a hot drink that has changed all their old ideas about "cocoa"

"ALL CLEAR TO LAND!" Soon, now, another long flight will be over. Throughout the last few hours, the captain and crew of this B.E.A. aircraft have been constantly alert, checking and watching instruments, receiving and sending messages, looking after the passengers, keeping steadily on course.

Captain Arthur Johnson is the skipper. Like all the British European Airways flying staff, he has had to score full marks for skill, judgment, reliability, and fitness. But these long flights are tiring. So when Arthur Johnson finally gets back to his wife Peta, the quiet, cosy comfort of his own home seems a wonderful thing.

Arthur and Peta Johnson both find, when their day's work is done, that nothing fits into their scheme of things quite so well as a cup of the *new* Rowntree's. They have discovered that the new Rowntree's warms them, heartens them, really *pleases* them—with its own smooth, creamy flavour—as no "cocoa" ever could before!

DANCE, BALLERINA, DANCE! A flight of thistledown . . . a creature of glamour and fancy . . . perhaps, perhaps. Yet when the last call has been taken, Claudine Goodfellow—'Carnival Queen' in London's latest American musical, 'Carousel'—becomes once more a very tired girl with a late bus to catch.

"When I do get home," says Claudine, "it's wonderful to be able to rest at last! But, somehow, I never imagined 'cocoa' could be such a joy in these moments of peace. You know, one remembered it in the nursery, but never thought of it as the delicious, cheering, hot-chocolate drink the new Rowntree's makes!

"It wasn't till another girl in the show insisted on making me a cup of the new Rowntree's that I learned my lesson. I'd never really known anything quite so rich and comforting."

"OH FOR A BIT MORE TIME!" Nine o'clock p.m. . . . a half-finished story that just *won't* work out properly . . . the menace of an editor's inexorable deadline getting alarmingly close . . . whoever said writers led enviable lives!

It'll be late before Mrs. Alison Barnes—well-known writer for women's magazines—leaves her typewriter tonight. But *then*, perhaps, she'll be able to relax—and think comfortably about that first novel she has in mind.

At such times, nothing seems so pleasant as a deep armchair and a cup of the *new* Rowntree's. There isn't anything else so soothing, so rich, and so delicious. That's why the new Rowntree's is fast changing people's opinion of "cocoa."

"CAN I HAVE A SECOND CUP, TOO, MUMMY?" Millions of women with homes to keep up and families to look after have found their menfolk and children falling for the new Rowntree's, with its richer, more luxurious flavour. These women wouldn't dream of asking for "cocoa" now—it has to be the new Rowntree's.

THE NEW ROWNTREE'S IS CHANGING PEOPLE'S IDEAS ABOUT "COCOA"

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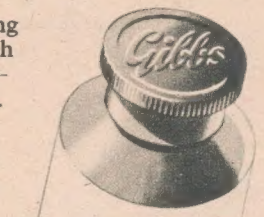

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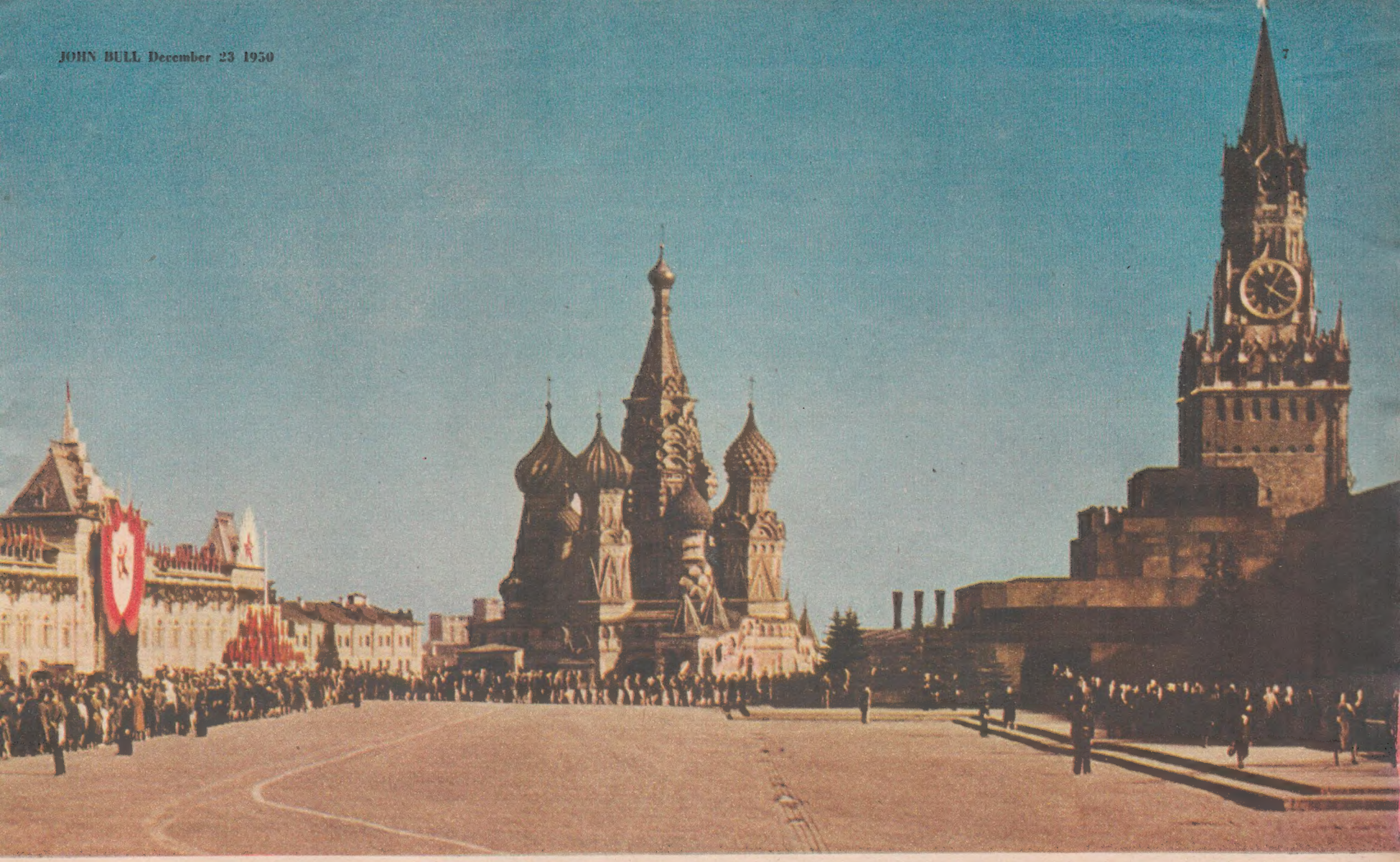

The queue in Moscow's Red Square passes St. Basil's. It stops at the tomb of Lenin, who said religion is dope. Yet many Russians go to church

Stalin's ambassador to God

by the Rev. W. E. PURCELL

Comrade Philippov tolerates God if He is kept in the safe obscurity of murmured prayers. But he fights God very hard when He comes into the world to influence people's actions

In Moscow, in a heated office with the double windows of winter now in place, sits a little-known Soviet official with a curious job. His name is F. I. Philippov; secretary, Department of Foreign Ecclesiastical Relations. Here, in fact, is the man at the heart of one of the most baffling features of Soviet policy—the mystery of God and the Kremlin.

In Hungary a Catholic cardinal is serving a sentence of life imprisonment, and a Lutheran bishop has been jailed for two years, after "People's Court" trials which stirred world opinion. Sixty per cent of the Lutheran churches of Lithuania are closed. Recent reports say that eighty per cent of the country churches in North China have ceased to function. Estonia has State taxes on confirmation and on Christian funerals.

But the other side of the coin, the "heads" to this tale of persecution, is quite different. In Russia itself the Soviet constitution recognizes the right to religious freedom. Red Army officers have been noted by astonished diplomats at packed services. From the same China where the country churches are closed, and where almost every Anglican missionary bishop has resigned in favour of a Chinese nominee, come reports that the new régime is not so down on religion, after all. Communist forces do not necessarily park their transport in the nearest church. And some at least of the Churches of the West have expressed gratification at the tolerance, instead of the expected persecution, which has come with the Red Star's rising. The Hungarian Protestant churches, ninety per cent of their steep bill for war damage paid by the State, have rebuilt extensively. The long list includes two hundred entirely new church buildings.

What, then, is Mr. Philippov really after, and what exactly is his policy? It is certainly a double one. Few Soviet officials have so well succeeded in moving one half of the world to grind its teeth and part of the other to hope that Stalin may yet be seen calling a National Day of Prayer.

Philippov is not in the Kremlin. His office address is Chisty Pereulok, Moscow, D5; which is an odd fact, for His Beatitude Alexei, the impressive, bearded Patriarch of All the Russias, supreme head of a Church revived during the war, also has his headquarters there. So Philippov shares a roof with the most important cleric in Russia.

From this office, with its subsidiaries from Prague to Pekin, F. I. Philippov watches over the ramifications of his tricky, yet extremely important, job. It is tricky because, for the strict Marxists of the Politburo in their Kremlin offices not so far away, God does not exist. Religion is dope. Lenin said so. It was Stalin's team-mates among the original Bolsheviks who approved Moscow's once famed anti-God museum, and the dynamiting of the venerated shrine of Holy Russia, the Chapel of the Iberian

Continued on page 25

Big noise of Tin Pan Alley

by ELKAN ALLAN

Everything about Lawrence Wright is large. His songs sell in millions, his stunts are gigantic. He even has a dual personality

THE STRANGER WHO INTRODUCED himself to music-publisher Lawrence Wright thought he had a good line. "I'm awfully sorry to presume on our short acquaintance," he said, "but I seem to have come out without my wallet. Do you think you could lend me a couple of quid till tomorrow morning? I know your chief composer, Horatio Nicholls, very well." Lawrence Wright looked hard at him. "If you know Horatio Nicholls and you don't know me, you must be a magician," he said, "because I'm Horatio Nicholls and Horatio Nicholls is me."

Lawrence Wright, plump, jolly, and—in the best sense of the word—vulgar, has been living this double life as top composer and publisher for the last forty-five years. One of his associates calls him "The Cochran-Churchill-Henry VIII of Charing Cross Road" and parts of his personality fit each description: he has something of Cochran's showmanship, a remarkable physical resemblance to Churchill, and Henry VIII's love of life. Other titles he has earned are "The Daddy of Tin Pan Alley," because he is the first music publisher in Denmark Street, now the centre of the music trade, and "The Edgar Wallace of Song Writing," from his vast output of 2,000 songs.

"I took the name of Horatio Nicholls because I couldn't go to artists as a publisher and say *I* was the greatest composer in the world," he explains. It comes from a combination of his mother's maiden name and his brother's first name. In full-page newspaper advertisements Lawrence Wright acclaimed Horatio Nicholls as "Britain's great song genius." In return, Horatio Nicholls wrote the foreword to Lawrence Wright's *Pianoforte Tutor*.

His partnership with himself began in his home town of Leicester when he was seventeen, and had run away from his job at a local printer's because he remembered, after the machine started, that he had left a spanner on the type. He had been born over his father's music shop; his father had been so delighted at his arrival that a youth who was haggling over the price of a violin found himself the recipient of it as a gift. Growing up in this musical and commercial atmosphere, young Lawrence showed an early aptitude for making money out of music by giving violin lessons to his playmates for a few pence. With £18 borrowed from his mother he took a stall in Leicester market, singing the latest songs on his mandolin and then selling sheet music.

A Lawrence Wright pianist plays for a duet.

After a time he bought an old cracked piano and bashed them out on that. But the profit was not big enough for him, so he tried his hand at writing a song himself. It was called "Down by the Stream," and, as no London publisher would touch it, he put all his earnings into printing it, at a cost of a half-penny a copy, to sell at sixpence. It went slowly at first; he was losing faith in himself and his songs when he caught sight of an elderly woman listening intently to his playing. With redoubled verve he played for her; the far-away expression on her face as she undoubtedly conjured up visions of running streams gave him back the faith in himself and his composition he had been losing. "I went home and wrote two more songs that night, for my first fan, that elderly woman," he recalls. It was not until three years later that he discovered she was deaf and had not heard a note.

Today, his company, which has the whole building opposite the room in Denmark Street he took for £1 a week, has a catalogue of 13,000 compositions, and every month adds several new "numbers," at least one of which is confidently described as "the biggest hit ever." Some of them, such as "Ain't She Sweet," "All the King's Horses," and "Stormy Weather," come near to justifying the description, but as for the majority, it's a wishful gamble.

Sometimes, as with "Jealousy," he publishes a song merely to fill a gap in his catalogue, and it turns out to be a hit. This uncertainty applies to his own songs, too: a producer of pantomimes asked him for a soldier song, something for sixteen girls dressed as toy soldiers to sing. Lawrie said he had nothing like it, but to oblige a pal, he would write something. With his extraordinary facility, he sat down at one of the pianos which dominate his office and rattled off a little piece he called "Toy Drum Major." He forgot all about it, not considering

Wright and some of his stars drink a toast to a panto starlet, Julie Andrews. The others are (left to right): Carole Lynne, Dorothy Ward, Marie Burke, Patricia Burke, Marjorie Browne

Wright himself listens happily as Marie Burke and her daughter Patricia sing one of his songs

it good enough to print, until a stage trade paper called it the biggest hit of the panto season. "My God, that's mine!" said Lawrie, and rushed it to press. It sold two million copies, and is still selling.

There are few million-copy hits these days. An average successful number sells 150,000 copies, and by that time the radio is playing something else. Fewer people every year bother to play the piano to amuse themselves, and gramophone record sales—the average is 50,000, of which the composer and publisher share ten per cent of the returns—do not nearly compensate for the vanished sheet music sale.

"Plugging" Is A Costly Item

Out of a song published at a shilling, the composer receives about 1½d., the rest going to engraving, printing, paper, staff, arrangers, free professional copies, promotion, and profit. Organizing the "plugging" of a number is the costliest item; publishers go to great lengths to get their wares played. They orchestrate for any sized band, keep a large staff to play new numbers over to performers, and, above all, blandish broadcasters to play them over the air, and thus advertise them.

Early in his career, Lawrie started his own "plug-shops" in Blackpool and the Isle of Man. These were open-fronted, and crowds gathered to sing his latest songs and buy the music to take home. They went out with broadcasting, but Blackpool, where his fabulous wartime headquarters, "The Castle," is a landmark, is still a centre of his activities. His rollicking North Pier revue, *On With The Show*, is in its twenty-seventh year.

Once he tried to bring it to London, with disastrous results. He formed a company to buy the Princes Theatre for £140,000, of which he guaranteed £50,000 himself. It was going to be "London's Lancashire Theatre," with tripe served in the bars. On the first night, the gallery booed, and critic W. A. Darlington wrote: "Mr. Wright seems to love noise for its own sake. . . . He had a brass band, an enormous organ, and twelve chorus girls with kettle-drums all operating at once. . . . I don't think I have ever heard such a paralysing row in all my life." The show closed, and that was the end of Wright's London theatrical adventure.

Showmanship of the crudest, and often most effective, type has always been a Lawrence Wright hallmark. Respectable hotels have found themselves full of huge signs, "THIS WAY TO LAWRENCE WRIGHT'S COCK-TAIL PARTY," put there by Lawrie himself on his way in. He brought Epstein's controversial statue, "Adam," to Blackpool front. "Epstein came up to open the show, and I was so carried away with the success of the opening, I bought a picture for an extra £1,000 and haven't looked at it since."

Blackpool police still remember with anguish his hair-raising trick to launch a song called "Me and Jane in a Plane." This was in 1927, when aeroplanes were less reliable than they are today; at the height of the season Blackpool was startled by the sight of a large biplane swooping over the town and apparently emitting music. Then copies of the song floated down, and as the plane lurched down to 250 feet to circle Blackpool Tower three times, the familiar figure of Lawrence Wright could be seen throwing bundles of music overboard. With him was Jack Hylton and his orchestra of twenty-five musicians, playing the song as best they could. The plane had to land for fuel four times on the journey from London, and at one stop a violinist took the opportunity of staying on the ground.

At various times he has ridden round London on an elephant (to popularize a song called "Baghdad"), and a camel (for "Sahara"); and, to launch "The Guards are on Parade," he had a couple of men dressed as Guardsmen, complete with bearskins, marching up and down Denmark Street. At other times he has given away thousands of imitation pearl necklaces to publicise "Pearl of Malabar," and the importers of bananas were so delighted with their increased sales due to the success of "Yes, We Have No Bananas," that they supplied him with huge quantities to give away. When he offered a reward of £1,000 for a banana without any curve in it to boost "I've Never Seen a Straight Banana," he received hundreds from all over the world.

One of the biggest hits he wrote himself, "Shepherd of the Hills," benefited from the publicity which followed his telephoning it from America. The story is that he promised to write a song for Jack Hylton in the boat going over, but forgot. A fortnight later, he received a cable from Hylton, "WAITING FOR PROMISED SONG," but could not think of an idea. Then the name of a horse, Shepherd of the Hills, caught his eye in a newspaper. He polished the song off, put a £110 telephone call through to London, had six arrangers taking it down, and Jack Hylton played it at the Palladium that night.

The Hits He Turned Down

With so many successes on his list, he can afford to be philosophical about the hits he turned down. "You can't be right every time, and when Herbert Rule brought me 'I Want Some Money,' I was so annoyed by his clumsiness in letting his cigarette fall on to my beautiful piano, I didn't really listen to what he was playing, and refused him the £5 advance he asked for on it. In the same way, I was angry with two young writers called Campbell and Connelly, and, when they played me a new song they had written, I snubbed them, and turned it down. It was 'Show Me the Way to Go Home.' They turned down a £1,000 offer I made them later for it to start their own publishing house. Trade gossip says that they made £100,000 out of that one song, alone."

Whether or not songs have made him a millionaire, he lives like one in a private suite in a West End hotel. Since he had a stroke a few years ago, the two theatre organs with coloured lights he kept in London and Blackpool as playthings have been sold, but he is still composing with his left hand, and runs the complicated affairs of his business.

He arrives at his office in a taxi every morning at 8.30 a.m. and signs on like the rest of his staff. In the entrance hall is a large photograph of him as a young man, with a slightly arrogant expression. It bears little resemblance to the old man—"I'm over sixty," is as near as he will admit—upstairs, looking a little like Humpty-Dumpty, with his bald, egg-shaped head and wise expression. His office, containing the couch he slept on when he first came to London, used to be dominated by his initials in lights to impress visitors. It is guarded by numerous doors and secret bells, installed after an intruder, who claimed to have been in the Navy with him during the first World War, held him up with a revolver. "I gave him £5 and told him to get out; and I had the police waiting for him by the time he got downstairs."

Love, Patriotism And Comedy

He has never had any doubts about himself. In a letter to his brother in 1912 he wrote: "It's real hard graft in this business. I am working from 9.30 a.m. to twelve every night, as I MEAN TO GET TO THE TOP. . . . I sold 5,000 of a new song in two days this week, published the day after General Booth's death, entitled, 'He Was a Grand Old Man.' This will sell, for even 'Be British' has sold 80,000 copies up to now. . . ."

"The themes of popular songs don't change," he says. "Love and patriotism, with a comedy number now and again—that's what the public want, and that's what song writers and publishers must give them. But you have to gauge the mood right; we had lots of songs sent to us about Korea, but they wouldn't go. People want peace today, not war." So Horatio Nicholls is writing a song for 1951 called "Festival of Britain," and Lawrence Wright is certain it will be the biggest hit ever. THE END

A chain rattled, a lock turned, and there, pale in the moonlight, was Pugh Esquire. "Who are you?" he asked. The postman prepared his piece

TIN WHISTLE FOR CHRISTMAS

by CLEDWYN HUGHES

ILLUSTRATED BY STEVEN SPURRIER, A.R.A.

Generous all the year, and a Scrooge at Christmas—that was Pugh. It wasn't natural, the village said

IT WAS AT CHRISTMAS especially that the reversal of Pugh Esquire's life could be seen. True, at all other times of the year his madness was peculiar and a most disturbing thing, but it could be tolerated. It was only in December that it really worried the people of Cantref.

Old Pugh lived in the relic of The Hall, a place which had once had peacocks and acres of lawns and six gardeners. Once there had been maids, and a cook with a foreign way of speaking; a whole gay life in the old mansion.

With the years, the taxes and the changing way of things had weeded out the gardeners and taken away the luxury of the place. Up to ten years ago Pugh Esquire had managed to struggle on with one plump maid and one blank-faced butler. But ten years ago the last of the fortune had gone and it was then that the madness had come to Pugh Esquire.

He reversed his life, living alone in the great house where once the servants had scurried. He turned night into day, eating his midday meal at midnight and sleeping with curtains drawn during the sunshine of June and the frosty days of January. Each Saturday at midnight he came to the village church and lit a candle there and sang a hymn. At three every morning he went for a walk with a paraffin-lit stable lantern.

In this way he changed the routine of his life. But he changed deeper also, for old Pugh changed his outlook on things. He had been a careful man in his life; feeding cock pheasants very well, but not overkeen on charity in the parish. Now in this perverse way he became suddenly generous; any who called at dusk might have a loaf of bread.

Indeed, David the Postman took a carrier bag with him and was always rewarded with a ham or some tin of fruit. Sometimes it was a loaf, but the postman was not overkeen to eat it after seeing the colour of the hands of Pugh.

Only at Christmas time did Pugh Esquire become mean and careful and miserly. Every other man, no matter how tight in the pocket he be, must surely relent a little at this time of berries and well-sung carols. But for the week of Christmas Old Pugh became mean exceedingly. Any who called were abused.

Even David the Postman would not take any mail there at Christmas time. Once Old Pugh set upon him like a mastiff and poor David could not get away too quickly, hampered as he was by clinging parcels and a full mailbag. As it was, he lost his peaked cap. But he had it back the week after Christmas, for it had been stuck like a head of old on one of the spikes of the mighty iron gates which are at the bottom of The Hall drive.

And it was David the Postman who this year called his two friends together. Shone the Half-Fisherman, so called because, although always wearing a blue throat-high jersey, he had never

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Ship that keeps the lines clear

by DON EVERITT

Its job is to hunt out faults in the ocean cables. There's not much plain sailing for captain and crew

Photographs by Concord Productions

Lucky for once, Captain Evans directs a repair in sunshine. If it's rough, the work still goes on

ONE AFTERNOON LAST SEPTEMBER, Captain Charles Claude R. Evans, a well-built Welshman of fifty, escorted his wife down the gangway of his ship, *Norseman*, and said goodbye to her for two and a half years. During that time he will be responsible for maintaining part of a network of 3,000 underwater cables which this year have carried across the world 500,000,000 words in news, diplomatic, business and personal messages.

Evans is the skipper of one of eight cable repair ships operated by the Cable and Wireless Company which owns about 150,000 miles of cable linking more than seventy countries. Every year the repair fleet tends more than 350 "interruptions" in the system. This involves the replacement of some 15,000 miles of cable, from beach level to depths of nearly four miles.

The causes of cable faults vary widely. In the North Atlantic some years ago an underwater earthquake snapped twelve cables. Fishermen frequently cut cables when they foul their nets —"if only they'd claim compensation instead." Near Para, in South America, farmers have been known to pull up cables running close inshore and use them for fencing.

One of the oddest faults Captain Evans has known occurred in the South Pacific immediately after a repaired cable had been slipped from the ship. As it sank, it fell across a whale's back. The whale panicked, thrashed about and got hopelessly ravelled, for the cable was naturally slack at that point. The whale's remains were later brought up with one of the broken ends.

Underwater cables are also liable to break through normal deterioration—corrosion and chafing. Oddly enough, they also have their own special pest, a worm-like, microscopic organism called the teredo. It has an insatiable appetite for the gutta-percha insulator which surrounds the copper conductor, and bores its way between the steel sheathing wires. "Actually," says Evans, "an effective weapon against the teredo —a tightly bound layer of metal tape—was found years ago, but many miles of old-style cable are still in use, and as fast as we get the pest out of one area he moves on to another."

The repair of an underwater cable calls for an ocean-going ship that will handle like a tug, and for a skipper with an unusual combination of skills. "We are really specialized pilots," says Evans. "You've heard the saying: 'A navigator gets scared when he sees land and a pilot gets scared when he can't.' Well, on some jobs we're over two or three thousand fathoms of water and on others we're almost scraping the bottom." In addition, the cable skipper is literally fishing for just an outsize piece of wire, never more than three inches thick and usually only an inch thick in deep waters.

During their tours of duty the repair ships work from strategic ports in the cable network. Last September *Norseman* was bound for Rio de Janeiro. She had several jobs to do on the way. The first was in the Bay of Biscay—a break in the Porthcurno-Vigo (Spain) cable, estimated to be 446 miles from the Cornish station in 2,350 fathoms.

Search For The Break Begins

Captain Evans feigned concern about the job. "You know the Bay of Biscay. Everyone knows it. If it's very rough going we can be hanging around for two or three weeks. And this break is in the middle of a fifty-one mile stretch of the original 1896 cable. Might have to replace the lot, if it's corroding badly. . . ."

Norseman arrived five miles south of the estimated position of the break at mid-morning on a Monday. It was dull and raining and a fairly heavy swell was running; on a less urgent job Captain Evans would have waited for better weather. The depth was checked and a mark-buoy was dropped to act as a base from which the grappling operations were to be measured. Steaming about a mile west, *Norseman* turned round and began lowering a Lucas grapnel.

The Lucas is one of four main types: two of them consist of hooks linked together so that they snake over the rocks; the third is rigid and has long prongs for digging into sand and mud; and the Lucas has a knife which cuts a cable in deep water and brings up only one end.

In 2,350 fathoms the grapnel would be trailing about two miles behind the ship, and it took more than half an hour to pay out the necessary 3,500 fathoms of grapnel rope. Eventually, Captain Evans gave orders to steam ahead and, at a half-knot crawl, the ship began the tedious "drive" across the line of the cable.

By this time, the captain and his chief officer, slight, sharp-featured Arthur Tudor, were alone in the bows. "No point in taking unnecessary risks. If that rope breaks it could kill a man." Captain Evans was directing the ship from a set of auxiliary controls; Mr. Tudor was sitting side-saddle on the grappling rope, "feeling" for the cable. "With experience," Captain Evans explained, "you can tell by the pulse of the rope when the grapnel has caught the cable and when it has lodged on a rock or something. And," he quipped, "when it's a rough bottom it's rough on yours."

The first drive over the cable covered a little more than two miles, lasted four hours and was unsuccessful. By four p.m. a second drive was just beginning. If anything, it was raining more heavily. "Do you know the most drives I've had for one cable? Ninety-six. In the mud of the Malacca Straits. Once, we had a drive of twenty-five miles in the Pacific; the cable had been plotted ten miles out on the chart. Another time, on the Durban-Mauritius, we picked up the cable first drive, then found it was a spare piece which some so-and-so hadn't hauled in from a previous repair. Sometimes, the grapnel gets jammed good and proper in the rocks and we have to swing the ship all over the ocean before we get free. Once, we had to lose a grapnel and about two miles of rope and start all over again. One way and another we could be here for a month. But we won't be. . . ."

At five-thirty, Chief Officer Tudor, still sitting on the rope, suddenly said: "This is it."

"Stop both," Evans ordered. For a few moments the ship's engines ceased turning over. At a signal from the captain the winch began hauling in the grapnel rope. Slowly dancing higher and higher, a dynamometer indicated the

Damaged cable has been brought to the surface. In a rope sling, a seaman is lowered to cut it

stress—eighty hundredweight, ninety, a hundred . . . suddenly, it dropped with a jerk. "She's cut," Evans mumbled, breathing a little more freely.

It took three hours to haul the cable up, and for the whole of that time the captain nursed his ship continually—now slow ahead, now a kick astern—to keep her over the spot where the cable had been hooked. Too much strain would snap it. "If part of it's buried or rotten it can snap, anyway. I've seen it part just as it broke the surface. . . ."

First the grapnel chain clanged in over the bow sheaves, then out of the water came the grapnel itself, gripping something which looked extraordinarily like a length of garden hose.

"Avast heaving!" The winch stopped. Already waiting in a bos'n's chair, the cable bos'n was immediately lowered over the bows to fix "stoppers" on the cable to haul and secure it on board. This is probably the most dangerous job of all, for it entails fastening chain and rope half-hitches on the cable while the strain on both it and the grappling ropes is at its greatest. On one repair job near Gibraltar the rope broke, struck the bos'n as it whipped back into the sea and killed him instantly.

How The Fault Is Located

The grapnel had picked up the Vigo end and, as expected, the station was contacted satisfactorily. The cable was fixed to a buoy and slipped overboard. Just after nine o'clock, with the weather unchanged, *Norseman* began searching with a Gifford chain-type grapnel for the other end. She picked it up on the first drive and by midnight it was on board. The fault, the chief electrician calculated, was about two and a half miles away.

Very slowly, the ship began to move down the line of the cable, hauling it in. Evans and Tudor stood by, watching anxiously. Suddenly, the bows swung and the cable cut the sea at an angle to starboard and tautened viciously.

"Dead slow ahead starboard! Dead slow ahead port!" Evans yelled. "Avast heaving!" The winch stopped; the strain on the cable slackened. "Half speed ahead starboard. Slow astern port." The ship swung back into line with the cable and moved on again.

Dawn was breaking when the jagged end of the fault came over the bows. The rain had almost stopped now, but a wind was taking its place and whipping up the sea. The two senior officers briefly surveyed the hurrying grey sky and the white-topped waves. "Blast the weather," Evans said. "We'll have a shot at getting the other end."

He took the ship about two miles north of the fault and, to his visible pleasure, the cable was hooked first drive. But the luck did not hold. While the cable was being hauled in, the dynamometer suddenly dropped with a jerk and the grappling rope hung almost limply over the bows. The cable had either broken or slipped off the grapnel.

Gale Calls Off The Work

By now the wind had almost reached gale force. Cursing still more, Evans called off the operation until the sea moderated. Throughout Wednesday and Thursday *Norseman* rode out the gale alongside the buoy holding the Vigo end. If nothing else, it gave the crew a well-earned rest.

Life in a cable repair ship is more than physically tough. The overseas tours of duty are probably the longest of any ships outside the Royal Navy. In addition, individual repairs may mean a month or more at sea, and on urgent jobs the crew often have to work non-stop for thirty-six hours. There are compensations, however. Pay and conditions compare very favourably with the rest of the Merchant Service. Officers' salaries range approximately from £500 for third officers to £800 for chief officers and £1,200 for captains. They also get from £72 to £144 in overseas allowances, and five days' home leave for every month's service.

The accommodation and particularly the food are very good. Lunch and dinner are four- and five-course meals. As Captain Evans puts it: "For eighty-five per cent of your working life this ship is home, so let's have it that way."

A native of Porth, Rhondda, Evans himself has been at sea since he left school. At one time —in the pirates' heyday—he was on a regular run in the China Seas. He joined the cable service in 1928, while in Singapore. Just three years ago, having worked in most corners of the earth and on a good proportion of the company's cables, he got his first command.

His present ship, *Norseman*, is one of the largest in the repair fleet. Like her sister ships, she has twin propellers for extra manoeuvrability and the characteristic yacht-like bows, specially built for hauling in and paying out cables and grappling ropes. She has a crew of seventeen officers, five petty officers and sixty-six Spanish seamen. Her cable tanks will hold about 200 miles of assorted cable.

Before daybreak on the Friday morning the wind dropped and grappling began again. Unhappily, after twelve hours' work the Porthcurno end was still on the sea bed. Twice it had been successfully hooked and then lost. At eight that evening, Captain Evans decided to stop working over the original cable. "We can go on wasting time like this for ever. The darned thing's so badly corroded that it'll keep breaking away." So, at full steam, *Norseman* forged some fourteen miles north to the point where the original cable was spliced on to a more modern section.

Making The Forty-foot Splice

Here, the first drive was completely successful. The cable was cut, and in the testing room contact was made with Porthcurno. Then, in the cold and damp of the early morning, the cable jointers started to splice on new cable from one of the ship's tanks. Like everything else, it was a long, tedious job. In all, the splice was about forty feet long. When it was finished it was hardly distinguishable from an ordinary length of cable.

At seven on the Saturday morning *Norseman* at last began paying out the new cable towards the other end, buoyed twenty-odd miles away. At the same time, as much as possible of the original cable was hauled in. "As it costs from £400 to £2,000 a mile," said Evans, "it's worth saving." It took *Norseman* four hours to reach the cable buoy. A boat was lowered to bring the end on board. The sea was relatively calm now and the job was simple. "It's not always so easy," said Captain Evans. "In a heavy sea that buoy can kick and plunge worse than a bucking bronco. There have been one or two nasty accidents."

Continuing to pay out the new cable, *Norseman* hauled in the Vigo end for about half a mile to clear any kinks that might have formed while it was buoyed. Shortly after midday Captain Evans stopped the ship. Both cables were stoppered and then cut. Through the afternoon, the jointers worked steadily, linking the two ends. The splice formed a loop, or bight as it is called, covering practically the whole of the foredeck. At five o'clock Porthcurno and Vigo radioed that the cable was working satisfactorily.

Job That Ends In A Flash

Although most of the crew had seen more repairs than they could remember, the bows were crowded as preparations were made to slip the cable. "It must give some sort of satisfaction to see the end of the job," Evans said. Two ropes were bound to both sides of the cable near the bow sheaves, then passed three times round bollards and held by two teams of men. After the stoppers had been taken off, they slowly paid out the bight until only a small loop lay on the deck. "Hold it," said Evans. Two men, each with axes, put wood blocks under the ropes. "One, two, three—cut!" The axes swung simultaneously, the ropes and the bight flashed over the bows and, with a slight splash, disappeared.

Sighs and mumbled words of satisfaction buzzed momentarily across the deck. As Captain Evans gave his last orders from the bow controls to the engine room and the bridge, the sun suddenly came out from behind a cloud. To the west the horizon was clear and red. Evans grinned: "Look at the bloody weather now."

But a few yards away a junior officer on his first trip had the last word: "Doesn't it seem damn funny that the war correspondents' dispatches from Korea and the birthday cable to your Aunt Aggie in Australia depend on the sensitivity of a chap's backside?" THE END

THE DESPERATE WOMAN

by MARTHA ALBRAND

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

Mink had betrayed her lover. She would betray Simeon, too, given the chance. It was a risk Anne had to take

There was savagery in his eyes and his voice now. "They're not going to get me," he said

SIMEON VERNON escaped from prison to find four men. One of them, Paul Jablonsky, had committed the murder for which Simeon was serving a life sentence in Felseck prison in the American Zone of post-war Germany.

With his sweetheart, Marie-Anne Thiolat, Simeon had been in a German concentration camp during the war. They escaped, and changed their names and French nationality. Simeon Vernon became Simeon Rodasky, a Pole. He was captured, lost touch with Anne, and was sent to a slave-labour camp. There, after the liberation, he joined a gang led by Paul Jablonsky, whom he almost worshipped. And one night, looking at Anne's photograph, Paul told Simeon he had seen her captured and shot.

With nothing left to live for, Simeon confessed to the murder of an American sentry, and received the life sentence. Then five years later, he had a visitor. Anne had at last got in touch with him. She was not dead. Paul had lied.

For months Anne, helped by Robert Sawyer, a British intelligence officer, searched for the four men whose evidence could lead to a retrial. The time went slowly, and at last, in a mood of desperation, Simeon decided he would have to act himself. That night, when prison guard Becker went his rounds, Simeon shammed illness. When Becker bent to examine him, he over-powered him, took his keys and, exchanging uniforms, walked out. Anne was in Munich. He had to get there quickly, before the alarm was raised.

PART 3

Prisoner At Large

ANNE cried in her sleep. She didn't know that she wept, any more than she knew, before awakening, that she had slept. But, opening her eyes, she would find damp spots on her pillow and wonder what it was that made it almost impossible for her to cry like other people, awake and conscious of their tears.

She was asleep now and, as always in the nights following a visit to Felseck, there was a wet spot where her cheek rested. Her face, mirroring her subconscious thoughts, was drawn and strained as if she were in pain. Finding Simeon hadn't made her nights easier. In the night her defences crumbled. Perhaps that was why she awoke with difficulty, not prepared to meet the new day until she had once more built up her powers of resistance. So when the telephone rang and rang, it was hard for her to realize that it was ringing for her, to stretch out her hand, to lift the receiver and pretend she was full of courage and hope.

The telephone stood next to her bed, for the Four Seasons was a quite luxurious place. It was one of the few hotels in Munich left completely undamaged. Now she looked at her watch. It was fifteen minutes past seven and she remembered distinctly that she had left word with the receptionist the night before not to waken her before half past nine.

Bob, she thought, as a new wave of sleepiness rushed over her. It couldn't be anyone but Robert Sawyer, her English friend, wanting to say good morning before he left his quarters near the Prinzregenten Theatre for his office. But it wasn't Bob. It wasn't the cheerful, comforting voice she expected, but a voice that sounded hushed and hurried. It spoke French.

It said: "You aren't going to disappoint me, are you, Marie-Anne? Or did you forget our bet? I've been waiting for half an hour at Maria Einsiedel. You dared me to go swimming in the Isar about this time of the year. Well, the bathhouse is closed and it is terribly cold, much colder than I thought. You were perfectly right. You might bring down a coat for me."

Not once, while the voice spoke on, did she try to interrupt it, but her free hand flew to

"Women always buy things when they're depressed." Anne span round gaily. Sawyer caught her arm. "Anne, there's something I have to tell you"

her mouth to stifle the scream forming in her throat. She sat in bed paralysed by fear, but when she answered her voice was calm.

"I overslept. I'm not even dressed. It will take me quite a while to meet you."

"I'll wait for you in the Auen."

Even when she put the receiver back on its fork she could not quite grasp the fact that she had spoken to Simeon, that he had escaped from Felseck and was hiding in some deserted spot in the Isarauen and wanted her to bring him clothes. Her mind refused to believe what she knew to be true even while her body, unexpectedly released from shock, obeyed the necessity to act without losing time.

Mechanically she picked up the phone again, scolded the receptionist for having connected her room wrongly and told him that it was no longer necessary to waken her. Then up went her hair, the shiny, smooth hair which usually fell along her face to her shoulders, and became two braids wound around her forehead. No lipstick, no powder. One impatient hand tore a hole in her stocking while the other splashed mascara over the brown leather of one shoe. The skirt was pulled up so that it looked skimpy, the blouse went on, buttoned at the back instead of the front. Then she slipped on an old half-length coat, and went out.

As she left the room, locking it after her, and ran down the service staircase to the left of the lift, she looked incredibly German, like a Wandervogel coming home from a hike.

By the time she got to the Neuhauserstrasse, the shops had just opened. Some were in barracks, some in one-storey houses, some in undestroyed buildings. She went from one to the other, buying a jacket here, a pair of trousers there, then, near the Karlstor, a hat and, finally, at her last stop, a suitcase.

In the ladies' room of the Domcaffee the parcels went into the suitcase, her skirt once more became the right length, the mascara was wiped from her shoe. She put on a good pair of stockings and straightened out her blouse. Then she hailed a taxi, and while the little green-and-black checked Opel crossed the city she went over her list of purchases again and again in her mind to see if she had forgotten anything.

All around the station were ruins and the station itself was still terribly destroyed, yet the square was busy with traffic as if war had never played havoc with this part of town. She watched her taxi drive away, mingling with the other green-and-black and red-and-beige checked cars before she jumped on to a tramcar. She had no idea where it went, nor did she care. She left it after a few stops and, while she was waiting at a corner for another taxi to come by, thought wildly that it could be only a question of an hour before the police would start looking for her.

After she had gone south for a while, past the Theresienwiese, she paid the driver, pretending to have reached her goal, a private house. Then she took a tramcar again and this time remained in her seat until the last stop. There she got out, but instead of crossing the bridge leading towards the zoo, she walked straight ahead, in the direction of Maria Einsiedel, passing the fenced-in bathing place Simeon had mentioned over the phone. Then, crossing the bridge which led into the Isarauen, she started to walk along a dirt path that ran parallel with the river.

There was nobody in sight and the greenish-blue river, wild and fast, fed by the glaciers of the Bavarian Alps, sang beside her. Above her a few gulls whirled and screeched. Among the trees, most of them already leafless, Anne became the hunted girl again, hiding in the woods, her eyes trained to watch for traces. The trace was there, too, right under her feet, hurrying across the dirt path—a clumsily drawn heart with an arrow stuck through it.

After a few minutes she saw a shack, or rather the roof of a shack, below her on a shallow spot of the embankment, and an arrow pointing to it. She walked past it, then turned, and, after having made sure nobody was watching, slid down the bank, crossed the small strip of beach and tapped on the door. Three times staccato, then a long knock, and the door opened.

She saw a figure in a grey-green uniform and drew back instinctively. They've found him, she thought. I'm too late. Now he will never get out: He'll get an extra sentence for escaping. Then, looking at the tall figure again, terror seized her as she recognized Simeon—in the uniform of a prison guard. What did that mean? What had he done?

"Anne!"

"You fool!" she said. "Oh, Simeon, how could you?"

Simeon started to speak but she shook her

Continued on page 31

Scientist who unmasks crime

by DENNIS HOLMAN

When he's on the job, the thief and the murderer can keep no secrets. The man who sees the invisible gets them in the end

Is this the pistol the killer used? In the Wakefield Laboratory a precise answer is prepared

A MOTORIST, RECENTLY PROSECUTED for being drunk while driving, heard one witness testify that he had probably consumed six double whiskies just before getting into his car. The witness, a dark, slim, dapper man of about fifty, with a clipped moustache, neatly brushed hair, and a battery of gold pens and pencils clipped in his waistcoat pocket, described himself as a Director of the Forensic Science Laboratory at Wakefield, Yorkshire. But the motorist was furious. The moment he left court he went straight to the pub where he had been drinking on the night in question and accused the management of harbouring a copper's nark.

"I had six doubles all right," he admitted. "But how did the police find that out unless they had a spy marking them up?"

Tables That Count The Drinks

L. C. Nickolls, the witness, describes how it was done, scientifically, at the Wakefield Laboratory. Long tables are ranged against the walls of the analysis room with white-clad assistants working at various contorted edifices of rubber and glass. One is a spiralled tube—a still—fitted to a retort of liquid being stroked gently with a gas flame. "Another case of a motorist charged with driving under the influence," Nickolls explains. "Alcohol is being extracted from specimens by distillation. The result will be weighed carefully and the percentage of alcohol in the sample obtained by simple arithmetic. From our tables we shall be able to read off pretty nearly the exact quantity the motorist had been drinking."

With experience, forensic scientists can work out a man's consumption to within half a pint of beer, giving him the benefit of the doubt if there is any doubt at all. If the case requires it, they can, by analysing the secondary ingredients, determine the actual type of drink consumed. Whisky is detected by the presence of its fusel oils. Gin, wine and brandy carry a characteristic odour. Beer has hops. They are intimate with all the brews, academically, and even if it is difficult to differentiate between brewers, they can at least say where the beer came from.

"When giving evidence we don't attempt to say a man was drunk," Nickolls adds. "We say what he had to drink. It's up to the magistrate to draw his own conclusions."

In one instance tests indicated that a man must have drunk a whole bottle of whisky, and, pressed for an opinion, Nickolls had to admit that with such a quantity inside him, he was more likely to have been in a coma than capable of driving. Yet the accused man had been riding a motor cycle and the evidence looked dubious, until it was found that he had bought a bottle of whisky in a shop, drunk it straight down, and ridden off before the alcohol could take effect.

Secrets In The Test Tubes

Nickolls waves his arm, indicating his squad of busy, unhurried scientists. "They are all looking for something," he says. The laboratory room is devoted to chemical analysis. Here they search blood and organs for suspected poisons. Here, after boiling and distilling and patient extracting, a pinch of blue, white or greyish stuff is produced, sealed in a tiny test tube, and sent out with a precise scientific report.

There will be an inquest, and perhaps later a trial, and later, long after the news is cold, the tube finds its way into a drawer among a collection of similar test tubes. Each tube is linked with some murder, accident or suicide, but there it stays, insulated securely from the horror and tragedy of that vividly human event. In that place of bottles, sinks, burners, scales and chemical smells, passion appears incredible. Stripped of sensation and intensity, crime is little more than sordid and ordinary.

What Nicholls has seen of crime in seventeen years of analysing would, by comparison, make the violence in a crop of whodunits seem like the milder forms of horse-play. One needs a strong stomach to look at some photographs of his case histories—bodies spread-eagled in woods and bombed sites, in charred rooms, on mud banks, girls with faces battered, or left strangled and exposed.

There is a bit of art and drama about a corpse in fiction, on the screen or the stage. The blood is red; the bullet hole or the dagger is spectacular. If it falls or slumps it does so effectively and the decencies are observed. But these bodies are indecent; their gestures are obscene; their blood is black.

Nickolls flicks over the photographs with no more visible effect than if he were a clerk checking invoices. Years of case-hardening protect him from a crime's emotional impact. His concern is not its enormity; but with detail, with the minute, microscopic fragment, the trace of a substance weighing no more than a ten-thousandth part of a grain.

In his pocket is a magnifying glass that he often produces at the scene of a crime, and smiles at the suggestion that this may appear, well, Sherlock Holmesian. "It has helped to obtain quite a few convictions," he replies, and remembers the case of a young woman found murdered in a hut.

She had been at a dance, but the ordinary lines of interrogation could discover no more. Nickolls asked for the clothes worn by her male partners at the dance, and received about forty suits. The last suit to be examined came in the tailor's box; it had been worn only once and appeared clean. What Nickolls found were forty-nine almost invisible specks of blood on the trousers, and twenty-six on the jacket. He proved how they must have spurted in a fine jet as the murderer hit her with the flat of a spade.

Wherever a man goes he cannot help leaving behind the marks of his presence; to the eye behind a microscope he is a great, ungainly giant, forever shedding particles and fibres that look like rocks and thick dirty ropes. He sits

Examining bloodstained clothing. No cleaner in the world can remove all evidence from a garment

down, gets up, and in that magnified world the spot looks like a cornfield after a thunder storm. He flicks the ash from his cigarette and the result seems like a landslide. To make things easier for trackers in that strange jungle, he cannot leave without tearing off bits of the landscape and taking them with him.

A girl walking along a road was knocked into the hedge bordering the road and assaulted. A suspect denied the offence; his clothes had been cleaned, but no cleaner in the world could remove all the microscopic bits of dry nettle leaves, straw and grass seed husks and decayed matter, matching those found on the girl's clothing and at the scene. The evidence made nonsense of his story that he had never seen the girl in his life.

"And we've got a number of hit-and-run motorists by matching paint, blood and hairs found on their vehicles with those taken from the scene of the accident," Nickolls recalls. This is straightforward stuff—he is prouder of their photo-comparison work, matching cut wires with the cutting instrument, scratches on picked locks and forced doors with the very tools found on suspects. "If criminals knew the half of how they give themselves away they'd be more law-abiding," he adds.

They Handle Twenty Cases A Week

Wakefield's Forensic Science Laboratory is at the service of twenty-three police forces of the North Eastern Area. Other areas in England and Wales are covered by laboratories at Birmingham, Nottingham, Preston, London, Cardiff and Bristol. Like that at Wakefield, they are the children of this generation.

Science has aided the detection of crime for well over a century, but it was not until 1934 that the Metropolitan Police Laboratory came into being under Dr. James Davidson. Nickolls was a member of this staff, until one by one the provincial laboratories were set up and he was appointed to Wakefield in October, 1941. "The police have come more and more to realize the value of the laboratory to them," he says. "Our work has increased from 170 cases in the first year to the present rate of about twenty a week."

Detective-inspector Spurr and Detective-sergeant Grunwell are the laboratory's police liaison officers, there as a link with the law. "We don't use the lab. only to convict a man; we've often obtained scientific evidence for his defence," Spurr says.

A laboratory report can put certainty into the policeman's case, or knock the bottom out of it completely. A man was found shot in a room, in circumstances which suggested suicide; but the weapon, a shot-gun, was lying nearby with the breach open and the cartridges ejected. How could he have broken the breach after blowing his brains out? The police were suspicious and wanted the answer. After examinations the laboratory provided three facts. There were traces of spittle on the muzzle of the gun, indicating that he had put it in his mouth; a murderer can't usually get that close. Pellets and brain were found in the ceiling; the gun had been fired upwards. The breach mechanism was defective in such a way that a downward push was found sufficient to open it; he had obviously done this in falling.

Crime follows fashion trends. A murder story has frequently given a real murderer ideas, with his own refinements added. But it is the suicide looking for a convenient way out who tries as far as possible to be up to date. Recently, when a coroner wanted to add a rider that certain drugs should be made more difficult to obtain, Nickolls replied that it was impossible to discourage a determined suicide, that a painless method was more humane than letting him resort to something like sulphuric acid.

The incidence of crime varies from area to area, and, though the general rate may go up or down, percentages of the various offences remain roughly the same. In the north-east, sex crimes are high on the list, with larceny, and breaking and entering not far behind.

Also common in those parts is what the criminal code lists as "Administering to any person any poison or other destructive or noxious thing, with intent to injure, aggrieve or annoy such person." The section covers cases as varied in intensity as that of the woman who put purgatives in her husband's dinner because she said he got drunk and his breath smelt, and the man who got eleven months for stirring rat poison into his wife's tea. In the same category are the lovers who fall out, and one sends chocolates to teach the other a lesson. The box might contain just chocolates mingled with sufficient chocolate laxatives to bring her to her senses. But there have been instances when the chocolates were treated with strychnine.

Trying The Blue-blooded Test

The test for blood is spectacular; even the most objective of chemists is tensed when he takes what appears to be a perfectly clean knife, wipes it with a filter paper, treats the paper with a benzidine solution, and the paper goes blue. A speck is removed from a carpet and dropped in a glass tank of water with a few drops of milky liquid. If the speck is blood the water will gradually turn blue; the test is delicate enough to pick up traces as remote as one in twenty thousand, or a dilution of two drops of blood in a bucketful of water. Whether the blood is animal or human is determined by mixing and comparing it with various tested sera.

It was this test for blood that started the West Riding crime squad off on one of their most sensational cases recently. A house, standing in one of the bleakest parts of the Yorkshire moors, was found empty, and the police became suspicious. Nickolls was called in and he saw what he thought was a number of small bloodstains on the walls and near the sink. By carefully filtering the water in the drains he found traces of human blood.

Within a few hours the crime squad picked up a young man named John Edward Gartside with a car he said he had bought from Percy Baker, the occupant of the house, for £300. In the end, Gartside admitted shooting Mr. and Mrs. Baker as they returned home unexpectedly from a holiday, stripping them, burying their bodies in a field some distance away and then removing every stick of furniture. Gartside was hanged.

The Wakefield laboratory equipment includes the very latest comparison microscopes for relating bullets fired from the same gun, cameras capable of photographing anything from a flea's whisker to the dome of St. Paul's, X-ray apparatus, instruments for recording colour frequencies of a spark to determine the metal elements in an alloy, and some of the strongest ultra-violet lamps in the country for detecting forgeries. In the samples collection are practically every seed, grass, wood, leaf and flower pollen in existence, with nearly all the brands of cigarette and tobacco.

One Time That He Was Fooled

Earlier this year, a policeman went into a hut at the side of a lake, had one look round and reported back to headquarters. Police cars converged on the spot, guards were posted and a call was put through to the laboratory.

Nickolls arrived, looked round the hut and nodded. "Blood," he agreed. Samples of the red mess on the floor were gathered up and back he went with them to Wakefield. A couple of hours later he rang through to the local police. "You can call your men off," he told the inspector. "It isn't blood."

It was an alga, the organism responsible for bleeding bread, as a loaf was sometimes called when it was cut open and the inside found to be soggy and blood-red. It is uncommon in this country, but a damp hut and a sudden warm spell provided the ideal conditions. They burned women as witches in the Middle Ages for baking bleeding bread. It is hard to blame them when the stuff fooled L. C. Nickolls; and he is an M.Sc., A.R.C.Sc., D.I.C., F.R.I.C. THE END

Nickolls at work: "If criminals knew how they give themselves away, there'd be less crime"

His garden is worth a fortune

by DAVID BURK

Planting bamboo canes in Cornwall was a good idea. Now there are fifty million of them—worth a shilling each

THE LARGE HAND-PAINTED SIGN that swings on the Lanivet village inn is one of the rare compliments paid by Cornwall's proud people to a "foreigner" from England. The sign shows a giant panda emerging from a clump of bamboo. The "foreigner" lives fifty yards away on the main Bodmin-St. Austell road, in a large one-time abbey which itself emerges from a twenty-five acre jungle of bamboo. He is Fred Nettleinghame, a strong-faced, brown-haired man of Suffolk, young and alert at fifty-four, who has given Cornwall—and Britain—a new industry.

Britain's bamboo industry began by a series of accidents. Nettleinghame explains the first of these by declaring: "I always liked Cornish girls." Thus, when he left the Royal Air Force in 1919, he became engaged to one.

Arriving at Polperro in 1923, with a little capital and a lot of self-confidence, he married at once, and began sniffing around the quaint seaboard town for money-making possibilities. Soon he had rented a disused mill and, with stock worth £17, opened it as a leather and handicrafts shop. In a few years he had ten shops and a wholesale business as well.

Then, one summer's day in 1933, Nettleinghame and his wife were driving along the Bodmin-St. Austell road. As they came to St. Benet's Abbey, standing back in its extensive grounds, Nettleinghame stopped the car and said: "That's where I want to live." The abbey, once part of a Benedictine monastery, was then a private residence. But the next year Nettleinghame saw it advertised for sale in a newspaper. He bought it at once, sold up his other business and moved in, determined to start yet another career. He became a nurseryman, cultivating bulbs in the grounds, and set his wife up in the roadhouse business, in the abbey itself.

He Thought It Was A Nuisance

This was where the bamboo came in. There were clumps of it dotted all over the abbey's twenty-five acres, and Nettleinghame decided it was a nuisance. He spent some time chopping most of it down and piled the thousands of tall culms in a barn.

In the spring of 1939 both roadhouse and nursery were flourishing, but with the advent of war the two businesses collapsed overnight. Creditors were paid off with bulbs, apples, typewriters, tables and chairs. Everything saleable went, except the abbey. Nettleinghame decided to volunteer for war service, but first he made a sentimental tour of his moribund estate. It was then that he came across the dried bamboo canes he had stored away five years before.

They gave him an idea. He sat down with pencil and paper and listed all the possible uses for bamboo. He inquired where Britain normally got her supplies, and learned that cane imports had stopped completely as a result of the war. He resolved to try to grow bamboo.

For a start he had to get rootstocks. He advertised widely for unwanted back-garden clumps and replies came in by the hundred. He went around digging up the branched spongy roots wherever he could, and replanted them in his grounds, picking up a working knowledge of bamboos and their habits.

One morning Cornwall awoke to headlines in its local Press: *New Industry at Lanivet.* British bamboo was launched. Orders began to come in from firms all over the country. Soon Nettleinghame found uses for his bamboo apart from garden stakes, fishing rods, balloon and lollipop sticks. Experiments showed it could be used for reinforcing concrete. Some of its wartime uses are still secret. Many inquiries came from Chinese restaurants, and individuals who had learned to eat the tender young shoots in chop-suey or as asparagus; Nettleinghame turned them down. He knew he could not sell baby shoots at a shilling each which, on an average, is what full-grown canes are worth to him.

Ten Years To Make A "Jungle"

Today, after ten years of trial and error, his twenty-five-acre plantation has 50,000,000 canes. Along jungle-dim paths his staff of twenty go about the business of cutting and tending. Roads have been laid, irrigation schemes carried out, sheds built, machinery installed and adapted. Thousands of canes are cut every week, set out in racks to dry, desheathed and stripped, cut to size, trimmed, bundled and dispatched. Nettleinghame's aim is 200 acres, each with 2,500,000 canes.

The enterprise has moved a long way since the day when Nettleinghame opened an encyclopaedia at *Bamboo*, and read: *Bambuseae members of the grass family perennial.* This was not very helpful. He then found that the only book on bamboo-growing ever written, called *The Bamboo Garden*, was published in 1896. Its author was A. B. Freeman-Mitford, later Lord Redesdale, who became interested in bamboo in Japan, where he was counsellor at the British Embassy.

The real father of British bamboo was Jonathan Rashleigh, of Menabilly, Cornwall, whose prime interest was in the East India tea trade. Sea captains brought him bamboo cuttings and he planted them as an ornament on his estate. Cuttings taken all over Britain from Rashleigh's grounds account for most of the back-garden growths of the present day.

Once established, bamboo takes a lot of killing. Not even a bonfire will do the trick, and its hardy, long-suffering nature enables it to withstand frost and snow. It will grow in any soil, even in marshland. By thrusting out its roots from the parent clump it increases at the rate of 100 per cent a year.

Canes do all their growing in one year, composed of two growing seasons. After their first six months they reach their maximum height. There are hundreds of varieties of bamboo. Fifty varieties have become acclimatized in Britain, but Nettleinghame has limited himself to twenty.

The *metake*, most common British cane, grows eighteen to twenty feet tall; the *fastuosa*, used for sea-fishing rods and trolleybus poles, grows to twenty-five feet, and one-and-a-half to two inches in diameter. Two inches is the fattest British canes will grow. Nettleinghame puts this down to the fact that no rootstocks of fatter varieties are available in the country.

The canes that have made him rich tower over Fred Nettleinghame. They will grow anywhere

Nettleinghame, naturally enough, curses imported canes. Because cheap labour is used and they grow in wild, tropical profusion, they undercut his own, he says. He protests that the British-grown cane, variety for variety, is equal in every way.

He claims that experiments he has had carried out on a small scale show British bamboo could be used for such varied products as feather dusters, toys, ash-trays, surveyors' poles, fishing nets, brooms, napkin rings, pea-shooters and compost boards. Tariffs are another matter. Says the Board of Trade: "The tariff on imported canes is now ten per cent. Any increase would have to be fixed on an international basis, which might prove difficult." Nettleinghame, given the last word, says: "I'd like to get it settled. But, in any case, canes will still be growing here long after I'm dead." THE END

Our Charlie drops a brick

by J. TREVOR STORY

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD O. ROSE

There would be an identification parade at school, and handcuffs, and prison walls. They might even hang him

MAUDIE, REG AND CHARLIE walked across Sparrowswick Heath on a warm autumn Sunday evening looking for a horse-chestnut tree. They had been walking for twenty minutes now amid the luxuriant heather and broom and bracken but so far, although they had passed many horse-chestnut trees and oak trees, too, and silver birch and mountain-ash all smothered in red berries, they had not found the particular horse-chestnut tree they sought.

The reason for their discrimination was that a week previously Charlie had come home with a pocketful of shiny new conkers, fresh from the green husk, one of which had turned out to be an absolute smasher. It had become the champion conker of all time, for in a matter of days Charlie had turned it into a tenner, then a fifteener. And finally the chestnut had brought ignominious defeat to another conker which itself had twelve to its credit. This, Charlie claimed, made his conker a twelve plus fifteener, a phenomenal conker, a conker in a million. And then, to Charlie's dismay, it had got tangled in Reg's string, flown over the garden fence and been eaten by a pig.

That was this morning. Charlie and his sister Maudie and brother Reg had lined the fence and watched the greatest conker of all time being devoured, string and all, without being able to do anything about it.

Charlie had blamed Reg, but Maudie, who was the oldest of the three children, would not let Charlie punch him. This arbitration was Maudie's main function in the family. With the wisdom of Solomon she had decided that it was up to Reg to help Charlie find another conker of the same quality.

Charlie had said it was impossible, conkers like that coming only once in a lifetime, but Reg, who had a scientific turn of mind, argued against this. He maintained that it was the toughening process of steeping the conkers in vinegar and then roasting them (or "acid imprecations," as he called it) which accounted for their longevity. Charlie had been able to disprove this by putting other conkers through precisely the same process—to the annoyance of his mother who had to accommodate them by tucking them round the Sunday joint—and these had succumbed to the first battle.

Now, Charlie looked around at all the big trees and little trees of which he could see only the tops, for the yellowing bracken was in places taller than he was. "It was hanging over a wall," he said. "That's how I know it. I had to throw bits of stone off the wall to get the conkers down."

Maudie became the policeman at once. "You didn't break down somebody's wall to get stones, our Charlie?"

Charlie would not look at her. "No, I didn't," he said. "The ones I used were only—only windfalls."

"Anyway," Maudie said briskly, "if there was a wall it must have been over near the edge of the heath against the big house."

"That's right," Charlie said. "Now I come to think of it there was an orchard on the other side of the wall——"

"Charlie. . . ." There was an ominous note in Maudie's voice now, for the words "orchard" and "windfall" seemed to be coupled too conveniently in her brother's vocabulary.

"Must be along here," Charlie said quickly, hurrying off. Maudie followed grimly after him and Reg brought up the rear, cramming over-ripe blackberries into his mouth.

The three children came at last to a clearing on the very edge of the heathland. Here a large house stood all smothered in a crimsoning creeper, its gardens and orchards and game preserves fringed by a low granite wall. Beyond this wall a massive horse-chestnut tree reared against the sky, its roots pushing through the wall at the bottom so that large granites lay loose on the ground.

On the grass lay many prickly green husks, the insides shining white against the green-brown grass. Among these, some still retained the brown nuts, while here and there a nut lay separate from the husk with brilliant piebald patches bearing witness that it had been discarded as unripe.

"Didn't you make a mess, our Charlie?" Maudie said, viewing the vitiated glade with the same distaste which her mother bestowed on the breakfast table.

"Don't matter about that," Charlie said, picking up a sizable granite and looking up into the boughs. "That'll all rot into the ground and make the grass grow—heads under."

As the big stone crashed upwards through the branches and leaves, Maudie backed apprehensively, Reg waited with technical interest for the few suspenseful moments between the stone's vanishing and reappearing, but his silent calculations as to where the stone would fall were upset as it thumped to earth only two feet away from him, bringing with it one solitary conker which proved to be quite unripe.

"You're dangerous, you are," Reg said after Charlie had crushed the offending conker under his heel and taken up the stone again. "What you want to do is throw the stone so it hits conkers on this side of the wall but falls on the other side."

"All right, Knowall," Charlie said. "Show me."

Reg took the big stone from him and after careful adjustment of trajectory he let fly at a rising angle of approximately thirty degrees. This had only half the expected result: the granite landed on the far side of the wall but so did a cascade of conkers.

"Let me have a try," Charlie said. He selected another, even heavier, stone from the base of the tree. This time it bounced against the lowest branch and once again thumped to earth on the other side of the wall, taking a number of chestnuts with it.

The two boys looked speculatively at the wall and then at Maudie.

"I bet there's some good-uns over there now," Reg suggested.

"Can't we just take a dekko over to see how many we brought down?" Charlie asked.

"All right then," Maudie conceded.

Charlie took hold of the top of the wall and pulled himself up. He studied the ground on the other side for a moment; then, swinging round with face pale and eyes large and scared, he tumbled to the ground.

Maudie helped him to his feet. "What's up? What's the matter, our Charlie?"

But Charlie was hardly articulate. "There's a man over there. A body. Our Reg's stone must have hit him on the head——"

Immediately the three of them scrambled to the top of the wall. Three pairs of startled eyes gazed at the dreadful scene. Around the bole of the big tree lay a number of conkers, some looking quite promising. About five yards farther into the estate, still under the boughs of the tree, was a big elder bush loaded with berries. Lying with his legs in the shrubbery and his head out in the open was a man. His face, pale in spite of the growth of beard, was turned upwards to the sky and across his forehead was a large, blue lump, from which blood trickled down over his closed eyes. Near his head lay the two large granites.

"Gawd!" Maudie breathed.

"That wasn't my stone that done it!" Reg had suddenly remembered the convenient

The man was lying flat on his back, bl

od trickling from his head. Nearby were the two stones. Suddenly, Maudie swung down from the wall. "Run!" she ordered. "There's a man with a gun"

assumption his brother had made even in the first panic of the discovery.

"Yours was the biggest——" Charlie started.

"We'll have to get a doctor," Maudie decided.

"We can't do that," Reg said. "They'll know who done it. Anyway, he's dead."

"P'raps he isn't dead," Maudie said. "P'raps he's just stunned."

BEARING in mind the size of the granites and the stillness of the rough-clad figure, this seemed hardly a possibility. And anyway, so far as the boys were concerned, it was a possibility that brought little comfort, for the thought that their victim might open his eyes and see them gave the tragedy a terrible urgency.

Charlie jumped down from the wall. "I'm going home."

"Wait for me!" Reg fell down beside him.

But Maudie remained on top of the wall and even began getting farther over. "You stay there," she said. "I'm going across to the house to find somebody."

The boys looked up at their sister, uncomprehending. The girl's face held all the panic which was in their hearts, but it held determination, too, and responsibility. "Wait there and don't budge," she directed and swung her legs over the wall. But before she dropped on the other side they all heard the sound of somebody breaking a way through the bushes farther along the wall. Instinctively Maudie flattened herself along the rough stone top. Then she quickly tumbled down between the boys.

"Run!" she ordered. "There's a man with a gun!"

The three children vanished into the bracken like startled rabbits, Charlie in the lead. They did not stop running until they had completely lost their way, finally dropping down into a secluded glade beneath a big rhododendron.

"Who was it?" Charlie panted, when he had sufficient breath. Maudie said, "Gamekeeper."

A silence fell upon them. Their thoughts were back with the stricken man. With the knowledge and clarity that comes from reading too many comics, they could visualize the ambulance arriving, followed by the local police and Scotland Yard, and then the big stones being wrapped carefully in a white cloth and hurried away to the fingerprint experts. And Charlie and Reg saw even further than this. They visualized the identification parade at school, the handcuffs, the cells and finally——

"They can't hang you till you're seventeen," Charlie burst out suddenly. "So you're all right, our Reg."

"Me!" Reg exclaimed. "It wasn't my stone done it. Mine went too far over——"

"And I heard mine hit the ground," Charlie competed, his memory suddenly inspired.

"Shut up you two," Maudie said, getting up. "It was an accident. Don't say anything about it."

"Not even to our mum?" Charlie asked hopefully.

Maudie had been applying thought and logic to the situation, an ability which came with twelve years and a feminine wisdom. "No. Don't say anything about it to anyone till I tell you. If it's serious we'll have to tell, but p'raps we won't hear any more about it at all."

Though this reasoning was completely beyond the boys, they were more than content to take Maudie's advice.

But they did hear something more about it the following Friday morning at breakfast time. As the week went by, the episode had lost its importance, for this was the second week of the new term and there were other atrocities to cope with, such as new masters, higher classes and more difficult arithmetic. Also Charlie had obtained one conker from the special tree which was already a ten-plus-three-er and looked like becoming more of a champion than the one which the pig had eaten.

Then at breakfast on the Friday morning their mother opened the local weekly paper. "Listen to this, Dad," she said. "'Last Sunday evening a man named Bill Wickens was found unconscious under a horse-chestnut tree in the grounds of Major Stopes's residence at Sparrowswick Heath. He recovered on his way to hospital. Mr. Lawlings, Major Stopes's gamekeeper, who found him, said stones thrown by children at the chestnuts must have hit the man on the head. Next Tuesday a man will appear at Market Walden Assizes charged with poaching——'"

"Is it the same man?" Maudie inquired, a shade too quickly.

"Of course it is," her mother said. "Only they can't say so till it's been proved. Just fancy, those kids didn't know they'd caught a poacher——"

"Gosh!" Charlie and Reg said together, their faces eager over their porridge spoons.

CHARLIE was about to ask if there was a reward when he was stopped by a reproving snort from his father. "Little hooligans, whoever they are. Might have killed him."

The two boys looked at Maudie, then went on eating their breakfast. But when they got outside the house Reg hissed: "I did it! It was my stone that hit him. I thought it sounded kind of soft when it fell——"

"Coo, you whopper!" Charlie objected. "It was my stone. You said so yourself—didn't he, Maudie?"

And Maudie, from whom a cloud of worry and uncertainty had just drifted into the morning air, laid her hands on their shoulders and gave them both a brief hug. "I think you both hit him," she said. Then she pushed them in front of her. "You hooligans!" THE END

YANGTSE INCIDENT (6): *Continuing the serial of Lawrence Earl's best-seller, the story of H.M.S. Amethyst*

Kerans plans escape

Now that the Communists had crossed the Yangtse, *Amethyst* was trapped. Kerans faced up to it. The choice was: to run the blockade of fire or accept freedom—on Communist terms

EVEN THOUGH during the afternoon of April 23, 1949, strong assault crossings of the Yangtse River were made both ahead and astern of the ship by the Communists, the order to sink and abandon *Amethyst* was never given. The high officers in Nanking and Hongkong who, in view of the danger of her position, had ordered *Amethyst* to prepare for evacuation, had changed their minds.

The ship, in fact, was not molested during the crossings; perhaps because the leaders of the Chinese People's Liberation Army felt that the opposing Nationalist Army was their primary adversary and any attention they might care to pay the British frigate would keep until later.

It was three days since the Communists had opened fire on *Amethyst* as she sailed up the Yangtse on a peaceful, routine mission to Nanking, and ever since the attack the Communist artillery had held the frigate trapped on the river under the threat of momentary destruction. The ship's company had by now dwindled to half strength. Of the 183 who had sailed in *Amethyst* on that fateful April 20, twenty-three had been killed (including Lieutenant-Commander Skinner, the captain, who died later of his wounds) and thirty-one wounded. Some eighty officers and men—both able-bodied and wounded—had been evacuated for safety at various times and had made their way overland to Shanghai. Now there were only eighty-one left aboard.

In command of them was a slender, intense man in his middle thirties, Lieutenant-Commander John Simon Kerans, who had been sent from Nanking, where he was assistant naval attaché to the Embassy, to take over the ship following the death of her captain. Under him were three officers: the young, boyish-looking Lieutenant Hett, the only remaining *Amethyst* officer aboard; Lieutenant Strain, the flotilla electrical officer who had been travelling to Nanking as a passenger on *Amethyst;* and Flight Lieutenant Michael Fearnley, a young R.A.F. doctor who had been flown to the frigate by flying-boat to take the place of the ship's M.O. who had been killed.

Too Busy To Worry

The Communist crossings were watched with great interest by Kerans. Junks, small boats—some of them propelled by outboard motors—and sailing craft streamed past the trapped British ship by the hundred, each one loaded heavily with troops and stores. They reached the south bank without Nationalist opposition of any kind. While this steady, unnerving flow of Communist troops streamed by, Kerans kept his men busy. He did not want them to have the idle time in which to think of what *might* happen if the Communists chose to turn their guns again on *Amethyst*. He ordered the shell-torn ship cleared of debris. That was done.

"Sandbag the wireless office," he said. "Sandbag the bridge, the wheelhouse, the charthouse and the habitable messdecks. If we haven't enough sand, use bags of flour. If we haven't enough bags, use mattresses, cushion covers, canvas kitbags. Anything. Make *Amethyst* as splinter-proof as possible." This also was done.

At five in the morning of Sunday, April 24, *Amethyst* listed suddenly and without warning to port. Kerans's heart sank, but he quickly ordered an inspection. The list had been caused by water which had poured through a hole on the waterline and which had seeped, additionally, through weakened plates. "Jettison topweight," Kerans ordered, "and pump out the hold." This, to the relief of all on board, brought *Amethyst* back to an even keel.

The next few days passed without excitement. Soon civilian junk traffic reappeared on the Yangtse. Both banks of the river were now firmly in Communist hands. *Amethyst* was ringed in even more dangerously than before.

On April 26 the ship had its first direct contact with the Communists. Just after one o'clock in the afternoon, three green-clad soldiers appeared on the south bank near the ship and began to wave and shout to attract attention.

"Send a steward up to the bridge to interpret," Kerans ordered. The steward arrived, but a high, whistling wind made the shouts from shore unintelligible. Two hours later, when the wind had died off, the Communists returned and resumed their shouting. The steward listened carefully. "They say come ashore and talk," he told Kerans. "Right," Kerans said. He called for volunteers to take the patched whaler ashore and for a petty officer to lead them. Petty Officer Freeman stepped forward at once; as did more men than were needed. "Boys and non-swimmers, fall out," Kerans said crisply. That left enough men to handle the whaler.

Putting On "Face"

Kerans knew something of the Chinese character. He knew they put much stress on what they call "face." With this in mind he had Freeman dress in Lieutenant Strain's uniform. As soon as the boat touched land, Freeman was escorted to a nearby peasant's cottage, taking a Chinese steward with him to interpret. Freeman was introduced to Major Kung, a precise little Chinese officer.

"I am the battery commander from San-chiang-ying," Kung grinned knowingly. It was this battery which had hit *Amethyst* repeatedly when she was first attacked on April 20. Kung added, "I wish to make it clear that *Amethyst* will not be molested provided she does not move and also provided there is no trouble from the ship. Of course, you realize this would never have happened if you had not fired first."

"*You* fired first," Freeman said coldly, "and you know it. Furthermore, our captain demands a safe passage down the river."

Kung shrugged. "That is not for me to say. It is up to the authorities in Nanking." He continued stiffly: "I wonder if you realize that British gunfire caused more than two hundred and fifty casualties to Communist soldiers and local peasants in the neighbourhood of San-chiang-ying?"

"I wouldn't know about that," Freeman said; but he was surprised to hear that such heavy casualties had been inflicted on the Communists

Some of *Amethyst's* key ratings: fifth from left at back is Stores Petty Officer McCarthy. Cook Griffiths is holding his mongrel Peggy, who helped Simon, the ship's cat, to catch rats

The sampan that brought in stores and kept *Amethyst* in touch with the Communists on shore

by *Amethyst*, and later by *Consort* and, perhaps, *London*, when they attempted to rescue her. He told the major of the *Amethyst's* lack of boats. Even the whaler, he pointed out, was in very sad shape. "I'll send a sampan out for you," Kung promised, "so you can contact us when you wish." He bowed briefly. The first interview was ended.

Two days later the sampan arrived. It was operated by three women, two of them in their early twenties, the third wrinkled and aged. One of the younger women carried a baby. In their sampan, the three Chinese females became *Amethyst's* sole contact with shore. Each morning, weather permitting, they paddled out to the ship and fastened to her side. Each evening they paddled ashore again. These three were the only women the *Amethyst's* men were to see for a long time. They named the ancient one Gran, and the mother of the small child Cheesi. The third—small, very dark and quite pretty—the men called Midnight.

"How about a date, Midnight?" the boys would yell over the side. "How about a date?" In reply, Midnight would yell back in high-pitched Chinese. One day Leading Mechanic Albert Garns asked a Chinese steward what it was Midnight always said in reply. The steward grinned. "Maybe better you not know," he said.

In the next few weeks several meetings took place between Lieutenant Hett and the Communists. Later Kerans took over from Hett. These meetings culminated, on May 18, in formal demands being made on *Amethyst* as a basis for further negotiations. The demands came wrapped up in a stiff memorandum which stated that the Chinese People's Liberation Army had decided to solve, through negotiations, "all problems arising from the atrocious action of British warships in their invasion of the Chinese People's Liberation Army front." It went on to state that "Colonel Kang Nao-chao, the political commissar of the Third Artillery Regiment, Chingkiang Front, was the authoritative representative on the Communist side for conducting negotiations with *Amethyst*." It asked for a representative to be appointed on behalf of the Royal Navy. Until this was done, the note said, there was no hope of a safe conduct out of the river for *Amethyst*.

"Admit Your Guilt, Or . . ."

Kerans was dismayed to learn that *Amethyst's* case, far from being placed on its proper diplomatic level, had now become a local issue.

All through the long succession of meetings that followed between Kerans and the Communists, the latter repeated their three demands as prerequisites to a final discussion regarding a safe conduct for *Amethyst*. They were: (1) An admission from Kerans of guilt of invasion and infringement of Chinese sovereignty by *Amethyst*; (2) The acceptance by *Amethyst* of the onus of blame; (3) The admission that compensation for damage and loss of life was due the Communists.

These demands, of course, Kerans found it impossible to meet. Still, he kept hoping for a safe conduct. . . .

As early as May, Kerans began to think that it might be necessary to break out if negotiations for a safe conduct ultimately failed. He appointed Leading Mechanic Garns and Ordinary Seaman Eric Saunders, under the supervision of Lieutenant Strain, as a damage control party. He did not mention his fears that a breakout might become imperative.

Garns and Saunders stuffed hammocks with mattresses and blankets and old clothing. They lashed each into a secure bundle. Then they took these bulging wads and stuffed them into the shell holes, from one to three at a time, according to the size of the hole. After that they shored the holes up with planks. In a month, they had filled in eight holes along the waterline; but there was one hole, in the stern, which they were unable to repair.

Meanwhile there were other, more pressing, problems to be solved. When Kerans came back from one of his shore meetings, early in May, he called Stores Petty Officer McCarthy into the small office next to the chartroom which he had taken over as his cabin. "There will be some traders coming out to the ship," he said, "with a list of what foodstuffs they can supply for us. See what you can do with them. Hongkong money is no good, I'm afraid. You'll have to try bartering with them."

Found Chinese Good At Bargaining

Next day the traders arrived in the sampan. The chief trader was a fat little man who wore a trilby at an incongruously jaunty angle. His assistant was a small man with snooping, busy eyes. Kerans's Chinese steward, But Sai Tin, acted as McCarthy's interpreter.

"What do you have for sale?" McCarthy asked. The Number One trader grinned without humour. "Eggs and cabbage," he said. McCarthy had heard that the Chinese loved to bargain and were very good at it. Now he was to learn that this was true. "What will you give," the trader asked, "for ten dozen eggs?"

"What do you want?" demanded McCarthy.

"What are you going to give me?" the trader insisted. It was obviously up to McCarthy to start the ball rolling. "Twenty pounds of sugar," he offered. Wearing a hurt look, the trader stiffened. "One hundred pounds!"

"You can keep them at that price," McCarthy said. He knew that he was in a bad spot. The trader could not have been unaware that he would have to buy in the end. Food on board, except for certain staples, was running low. The trader stood and said nothing and looked at McCarthy and waited. Then he began to wave his arms about and talked for a long time with But Sai Tin. "What does he say?" McCarthy interrupted. The steward's face was impassively Oriental. "He says you can't have the eggs at that price." McCarthy's lips thinned. "All right. Thirty pounds of sugar." There was another long conversation in Chinese. Then: "He says no, he can't do it."

"My last offer," McCarthy said, "is forty pounds of sugar. Take it or leave it!" He turned quickly and walked away, worrying and wondering, even as he did so, if he were taking too big a risk. But the Chinese steward ran after him. "He says forty-five!"

"All right," McCarthy said, secretly relieved. "Now, what about potatoes?" Then the bargaining began all over again from the beginning.

As the weeks wore on, the trader pushed McCarthy's price limit higher and higher. Ten dozen eggs, instead of costing forty-five pounds of sugar, shot up to one hundred pounds. For sixty-six pounds of potatoes the trader demanded one fifty-pound bag of sugar plus one hundred pounds of flour. It became only a question of time before sugar and flour would become too scarce to use as barter goods. *What are we going to eat then?* McCarthy thought.

During the long, sweltering wait—the temperature was going up each day—Kerans did his best

The Communists were not the only enemy the men had to face. There was another, in its way even more deadly. That enemy was boredom

to keep his men busy. He stuck to a strict service routine: regular times of duty, regular jobs to do. Boredom was an enemy even more deadly in its way than the Communists ashore. The men soon realized this.

One afternoon Able Seaman Bill Garfitt and Leading Seaman George Hartness were playing Ludo on the after-messdeck. Hartness, suddenly remembering the forty or more gramophone records on board the ship which had not been played since Hongkong, stopped in the act of rolling the dice. "Say, Fish," he said, "what do you say we put on some of those records over the ship's relay equipment with a commentary? We could play requests for everybody from the captain down."

"Sure, Scouse. We can pull a few legs. You and me can be the M.C.s." The two men left their unfinished game to ask Kerans's permission to broadcast over the S.R.E. He said they could go ahead with the scheme. That evening, Hartness introduced the first record. "This song," he announced, "comes to the ship's company with all good wishes from the after-messdeck." The song, a recording by The Ink Spots, blared out over the ship. It was called, "Don't Ask Us When We're Leaving." . . .

Shot In The Dark

The Communists were always there, with their eyes and their guns on the *Amethyst*. One evening, four of the crew, Winfield, Hawkins, Brown and Maddocks were lounging around on the quarterdeck, singing songs that reminded them of home, and then falling silent for a while and then wisecracking at one another and then, after a while, singing nostalgic songs again. They often did that of an evening, standing around and singing and smoking. At about ten o'clock, Winfield struck a match to light a fresh cigarette. As he did so there was a sudden sharp crack of a rifle from the shore. The shot went well over their heads, but in a flash there was a scuffle of feet and the deck was empty.

A few nights later, Hawkins and Winfield decided to have revenge. They borrowed a boiler suit and stuffed it to look like a guy, complete with gloves and boots. They took it up to the quarterdeck near the ship's bell and in full view of the shore. They could see a group of Communist soldiers gathered on the shore watching the ship. Winfield pinned a placard on the guy's chest. The placard said: "Mao Tse-tung."

Hawkins cleared his throat. Very solemnly he pronounced: "Mr. Mao Tse-tung, we find you guilty of crimes against the British Navy and sentence you to hang by the neck." He fastened a rope around the guy and fastened the other end of the rope to the crosspiece that held the ship's bell. Winfield, equally solemn, said: "May God have mercy on your soul." Mao swung in silent, unprotesting effigy on the rope. Somehow it seemed to relieve the men's feelings.

News From Home

Their first mail, three bags full, arrived at midnight, June 24. It had been forwarded on by the Communists from Shanghai. Everybody on the ship turned out of bed to read the mail from home. Stores Petty Officer McCarthy received three letters from his wife and two Sunday newspapers containing lengthy and colourful accounts of the first shelling. McCarthy pointed to the black headlines. "Well," he said to Petty Officer Freeman, a little surprised, "they've been thinking of us at home, after all." He had until then shared the accepted view held by Navy men that when one of them left the shores of Britain, he was completely forgotten until he returned home once again.

"That's a change for the people at home," Freeman said drily. But he and McCarthy were secretly pleased. They were stirred by the arrival of the mail. Neither of them slept that night. All over the ship, into the early hours, there was the restive murmur of men discussing the news from home.

On the morning of July 5, Kerans had Leslie Frank, a veteran of twenty-four years' service who was in charge of the wheelhouse, called into his small cabin. "I'm going ashore for another meeting with Colonel Kang," Kerans said. "It's this afternoon. Would you like to come along and take notes?" It had been Kerans's policy to take a different petty officer or key rating with him to each meeting. He thought it was good for the ship's morale.

"I'd like to very much, sir!" Frank said eagerly. He was delighted at having been chosen. He had begun to keep a diary and this would give him a most welcome chance to enlarge his field of observation.

It was raining. The drops came down, fat and heavy and with tropical fury. As they were about to board the sampan, Kerans said: "Better get an oilskin for Gran: she's too old for this kind of weather." An oilskin was given to the aged one, but as soon as she put it on, there was a loud howl of protest from Cheesi and Midnight. "What's the trouble?" Kerans asked. "No take us ashore," the interpreter said, shrugging, "until all get oilskins. Too wet, they say." Kerans ordered two more oilskins.

The meeting was held in a large stone house in a village called Ma Chen Shan. Kerans and Frank sat down at a long table, facing Kang and his interpreters. A photographer, a member of the Propaganda and Press division of the Communist Army, kept shooting pictures of the two Britons with a Leica.

Tea was brought in and poured into small white cups. They sipped the tea for a while. Then, abruptly, Kang began to speak in Chinese. He was about fifty years old and solidly built. He had been for ten years a Peking lawyer, and he carried himself with a kind of grim arrogance.

Colonel Kang's Demand

His interpreter translated as he spoke. "I would like to stress again," Kang began, "the points of the meetings held on the twentieth and twenty-third of June. If the British will acknowledge that they *invaded* Chinese waters without the authority of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, an early solution to *Amethyst's* proceeding down river may be found. Talks on the question of your guilt and so on could then continue after *Amethyst* has gone."

Frank thought, *He's going to let us go!* Kerans, however, shook his head. "The word *invaded* is not to be used. That is an assumption before it has been proven—and a very serious word to use."

"There may be some difference between the Chinese and the English wording," Kang acknowledged. "I have to abide by the Chinese wording."

Kerans sipped his tea. "The word 'invade,'" he insisted, "means to commit a hostile act—which we never intended to do, as we are neutral. You cannot use the word 'invade.' This would mean we had entered the Yangtse with intention to invade China, which is ridiculous."

Kang said: "Does Admiral Brind admit the British ships were guilty of entering the river?" Brind was the British commander-in-chief, Far East Station.

"*I* recognize the *Amethyst* entered the Chinese national river and the C.P.L.A. frontier zone without the permission of the Chinese People's Liberation Army." Kerans was expressing himself very carefully and formally. He was aware that, through the interpreter, he would sound even more stilted.

Kang's face was dour. "The reason I have to use the word 'invade' is because *Amethyst* invaded Chinese sovereignty and the sovereignty is the main consideration."

"You cannot use that word." Kerans's voice rose a little with suppressed anger. "It means we are at war, and we are not. We are a friendly nation and always have been."

"I suggest we leave this," Kang said, rising to his feet, "until a later meeting."

Kerans's face went white. "I insist that the discussion continue!"

Kang sat down again. "Very well. If Admiral Brind can admit the guilt of the British we can discuss the subject of compensation after *Amethyst* has gone."

Somewhere along the line, Frank had lost the thread of the bickering. Kang and Kerans talked on for a while longer. The last words the Communist colonel said to Kerans were: "I wish you good luck on the journey down river." Frank was elated. He returned to the ship convinced that at long last, *Amethyst* would be going down river with a safe passage. His optimism quickly spread among the rest of the crew.

One Dangerous Alternative

Three days later Kerans went ashore to meet Kang again. As he returned in the sampan, the entire crew clustered in little groups on the quarterdeck, awaiting the latest word. The sampan came alongside. "He's got a long face," someone said. It was true: Kerans's face was dark. "Everything's off," he said as he stepped aboard. "I don't know how long we'll be." He was feeling very low, with his responsibility for the crew's safety heavy on his shoulders. He knew that if the safe conduct was not soon forthcoming, there was only one dangerous alternative—to break out. And that almost certainly meant more casualties. . . .

The sun was shining, beating down on the deck. Heat waves rose, shimmering, from the surface of the Yangtse, and behind them the banks of the river seemed to throb and pulsate. Michael Fearnley, the R.A.F. doctor, was stubbornly taking his daily constitutional around the upper deck, when Leading Mechanic Garns called to him from the rails. "Cheesi wants you to take a look at her baby, sir," he said.

Fearnley looked over the side and saw that the Chinese girl was holding the baby up high in her arms. Kerans strolled by. "You might as well, Doc," he said. "They're our only contact with shore. It would create a good feeling."

"All right," Fearnley said. The baby had an infection in one of its eyes. Fearnley treated the infection and in two days it had quite cleared. The day following the cure, Cheesi, thoroughly impressed by Fearnley's skill, brought her husband out in the sampan to see the doctor. The Chinese had chronic malaria. Fearnley did what he could. When Cheesi's husband left, Fearnley was one basket of eggs the richer.

The Impatient Patient

Next day Midnight brought her husband who had a series of small tumours just under his skin. "I'm going to give you a local anaesthetic," Fearnley told him through a ship's steward. "You won't feel anything but one small jab." The Chinese nodded. He stretched out at full length on the operating table. Fearnley pressed the hypodermic home and released the anaesthetic. He had barely withdrawn the needle when Midnight's husband, grinning cheerfully, hopped off the table, bowed, and started to pull up his trousers. "Hey!" Fearnley said. "What the hell's going on here?" He pushed the Chinese back on to the table. There was a flood of protest. The steward laughed. "He think it all done. He felt the jab and you say he feel no more. So he think it all done."

Fearnley's fame spread. The Number One Chinese trader who was supplying the ship with eggs and vegetables came along. He had an ulcer on his back. He asked Fearnley for treatment, which he was given, and for it paid the doctor with a basket of eggs and a live duck.

That afternoon Kerans stepped out into the

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN WORSLEY

Kerans sat facing the arrogant political commissar, Colonel Kang. Throughout the negotiations a Communist photographer took pictures for propaganda

sun from the wireless office. He rubbed his eyes. He looked again. Yes, it was true. Stoker Mechanic Charlie Hawkins, clad only in shorts, was marching around the deck wearing a wide grin. In his hand he had the end of a piece of string. On the other end of the string was a live, quacking, waddling duck.

Later, when he told Hett about it, Kerans said: "You don't often see a sight like that on one of His Majesty's ships!" He felt in high spirits for quite a while after that.

The meetings between Kerans and Kang went on. The Communist colonel seemed to take a sadistic and deep pleasure out of first raising Kerans's hopes at one meeting and dashing them down at the next. The safe passage always seemed to bob up ahead of Kerans, like a rabbit before greyhounds, but he was never able to get close enough for a final pounce. After a while he became convinced that Kang was hoping *Amethyst* would eventually have to give in for lack of both food and fuel.

Kerans had done his best to deal with these shortages. On July 1 he had reluctantly put the ship's company on half rations. The fuel problem he had tackled much earlier when, at the beginning of June, he ordered the consumption of fuel on board to be reduced. This meant that the power was completely cut off for long periods which grew longer as the days went by. By the end of June, *Amethyst* had had one stretch without power which lasted fifty-nine hours. During such times the fans were still, leaving the ship humid and almost unbearably hot. There was no pressure with which to flush the toilets. Even the refrigeration was shut off at the risk of spoiling the remaining meat.

It was like living in a dead ship. The officers and men, accustomed to the steady hum of motors, often caught themselves listening for the missing, familiar sounds. They felt strangely on edge. They listened uncomfortably to the noises it is not normal to hear on a live ship: echoing steps on steel decks; the scraping click of the claws of rats scurrying overhead; the sighing of the rigging and the hollow voices, far away in another part of the ship.

Rats Were Everywhere

The rats had bred in the festering heat. They were everywhere. They had even eaten the backs off a number of books in the wardroom. Simon, the ship's cat, managed to pounce on a few; Peggy, a mongrel bitch that Cook Griffiths had picked up in Singapore, was less successful. And traps were of no use at all. But the men occasionally had luck with wire snares.

There was one particular wire channel which ran along the roof of the after-messdeck. At night the rats would run along it, scraping with their wicked little claws. A few of the men got together. Something had to be done about that wire channel. They set a snare on it one night.

Underneath the channel, Boy Wilfred Parnell had set up a complicated sleeping arrangement for himself. Because of the intense, oppressive heat, he had decided that the thing to do was to get his camp bed up to the level of the portholes. That way he would get any breeze that happened to be going. He had pulled a mess table out from the bulkhead and had erected his camp bed on the table. He did not know that the rat snare had been attached to the wire channel just over his head.

At about eleven o'clock, Parnell was beginning to doze off just as a huge, red-eyed rat, running along the channel with its customary cockiness, poked its neck into the snare. There was a mad scratching and scrambling of furry feet and a frenzied twisting of a furry body. Then the rat fell off the channel. Squealing, and with its struggles re-doubled, it kicked about in its death throes. Its hind legs were inches now from Parnell's face.

Faintly aware that there was movement near him, Parnell opened his eyes. "Hey!" he yelled. Without thinking, he twisted off the camp bed. He landed on the table, bounced once, and hit the deck. For a moment he was stunned. Meanwhile, one of the seamen had run for a pail of water, kept ready for just such an emergency. He held it under the rat, cut the wire, and rushed out on deck to pour the strangling, drowning rodent over the side. Parnell crawled to his feet shakily. He looked up in the darkness. The rat was gone. He rubbed his eyes. "What's the matter, Parnell?" a voice asked with mock seriousness. "Been having a nightmare?"

One night in July the ship was very nearly rammed by a Chinese ship which was going down river. Kerans thought: *If the Chinese*

Here's my tip for a jolly good Christmas!

VP wine

POINT BRAND

	Bottles	Half-bottles
VP RICH RUBY / VP SWEET WHITE	6/-	3/3
VP BRITISH SHERRY	7/9	4/-
VP GINGER WINE	7/-	-

Take your pick from the pick of the vine

If you prefer a stronger, fuller wine, ask for
VP THREE STAR ★★★ WINES
RICH RUBY · SWEET WHITE
BRITISH SHERRY
Bottles 9/6 Half-bottles 5/3

can navigate the Yangtse at night, why can't I? Artillery fire was less accurate by night. And the element of surprise was greater after dark. In his mind, *Amethyst's* captain began to formulate the first vague outline of an escape plan.

Kerans said nothing about the possibility of a breakout either to officers or to men. Instead, when he ordered large chunks of the frigate's superstructure to be cut away—to alter the ship's silhouette and to reduce topweight for greater stability—he explained it as a further move in his campaign to maintain morale by keeping his men busy. He trusted his crew completely, but security was a matter of life and death. Suppose, he thought, the Chinese on board should get wind of the fact that he was contemplating a breakout. Suppose one of them, even unintentionally, should let something slip to the sampan girls or the traders. Even the smallest risk was far too great to take.

Meanwhile, Kerans had been making insistent demands on the Communists for oil-fuel. The men, he complained, were suffering from the intense heat and he could not run the ventilators. Even his powder magazine was in danger of blowing up if it were not kept cool. Food would go bad if the refrigerators had to be shut off too long. He kept hammering at this need for fuel. Without oil-fuel for his engines it was hopeless to think of breaking out.

Then it came—fifty-four tons of it. It came in drums by junk from Nanking. It was Admiralty fuel, and it had been stored for just such an emergency as this. The drums were loaded on to *Amethyst* by hand. Everyone, officers and men, buckled down to the job, getting blacker and blacker with oil as the day wore on. Finally it was all poured into the *Amethyst's* tanks. When the job was done, every man on board was exhausted, but the arrival of the oil had boosted their morale. Still Kerans was puzzled. "I'll never know," he said to Hett, "why the Communists let us have it."

A Strange Message

Kerans was greatly handicapped by the fact that the secret code books had been destroyed on April 20 when it was thought that *Amethyst* was about to be abandoned. He could not, because of that, advise Admiral Brind in plain language over the wireless of his plans for a dash to safety. The Communists, he knew, were monitoring the air. Nevertheless, on July 7, he did signal the Commander-in-Chief: WOULD BE GRATEFUL YOUR ADVICE PLEASE ON MY ACTIONS IF MENACED BY TYPHOON.

Kerans knew that typhoons were not at all unusual along the Yangtse. He also knew that this query, an elementary one which an officer in His Majesty's Navy would never need to ask, would not be taken at its face value in Hongkong. He was simply asking in veiled terms for permission to break out if the opportunity came. Brind replied at once: TYPHOONS UNLIKELY REACH YOU IN SERIOUS STRENGTH AND YOU ARE IN GOOD HOLDING GROUND. THE GOLDEN RULE OF MAKING AN OFFING AND TAKING PLENTY OF SEA ROOM APPLIES PARTICULARLY.

Kerans read the admiral's message through again and again. *"The golden rule of making an offing and taking plenty of sea room applies particularly."* He was reasonably convinced that this meant he had been given permission to run for it if he chose: but he could not be certain. The first part of the message seemed to contradict the second. The difficulty, of course, was that any double meaning subtle enough to escape the attention of the Communists would always leave some room for doubt.

On July 24 they met Gloria. Gloria was a typhoon. Kerans had been informed by radio that she was on her way. At first he thought he might be able to slip anchor on Gloria's arrival and ride out of the river under her cover; but the centre of the typhoon passed them too close to risk it.

During the typhoon, great chunks of earth dropped from the Yangtse's banks into the current. River traffic scurried to shelter. Once a live pig passed the ship, struggling in the water, and some of the stokers tried to rescue it for dinner with a rope as it swept by. After a while a house floated down in the current, indicating that large areas of low-lying land were now under water.

Gloria's fury subsided. The wind and the rain died away, leaving *Amethyst* still anchored solidly and with the Yangtse high and angry and speeding faster than ever towards the open sea. By now Kerans knew that if he was going to break out he was going to have to do it soon. The supply of oil on board was sinking again. The question was, how could he, without giving his intention away to the vigilant Communists, let the Commander-in-Chief know of his plan?

Code Word "Ichabod"

Sitting alone in his cabin trying to think of a way, he suddenly hit on an idea. He had remembered that, when he was newly married, he and his wife, Stephanie, had concocted a code so that he could at times, and harmlessly, pass a message to her. It was the sort of private code nearly all members of the Forces overseas used with their families during the war. In the Kerans code "Ichabod" meant "I'm coming home."

Kerans had French tap out a personal message to Mrs. Kerans: HAVE YOU RECEIVED TEN POUNDS FROM THE BANK? WRITE AND TELL GOLDSMITHS I CAN'T PAY AS STILL IN COMMUNIST HANDS. ICHABOD. KERANS. The operative word, of course, was "Ichabod"—"I'm coming home." The remainder of the message was pure invention. Kerans knew that this message would be passed through Naval headquarters in Hongkong and then through the Admiralty in London before it reached his wife. He hoped some inquisitive Naval desk man would wonder about the meaning of "Ichabod" and check with Stephanie about it. Even if this failed, he felt sure that, realizing the significance of the code message, she would inform the Admiralty about it.

In due course, Hongkong passed the telegram on to the Admiralty and the Admiralty passed it on to Mrs. Kerans. She read it, completely puzzled. It had been a long time since they had used their code; long enough for her to have forgotten it. *I wonder what's the matter with John,* she thought worriedly. *It isn't like him not to make sense.* "Ichabod" no longer meant anything to her. . . .

A day or two later Kerans issued a strange order. "I want the cable lashed with bedding," he said, "but first soak the bedding thoroughly in soft soap and grease." There were blank faces around him. "Every time the ship swings at her moorings," Kerans added, "the cable screeches and scrapes. It's getting on my nerves." He left it at that. But sitting in his small, hot cabin, he had been making plans. The vital point in breaking out, he thought, will be in slipping the cable and turning the ship without noise. The whole getaway will hinge on that. One sudden noise and we'll be blown right out of the water.

He made up his mind about the escape at three o'clock on the afternoon of July 30. He was sitting on a steel bollard in the sun when he sent for Strain. "George," he said, "look, old boy, I'm going to break out tonight."

***NEXT WEEK:** Amethyst slips anchor and the daring dash to freedom is on*

"Now then—who's for a nice mince-pie?"

STALIN'S AMBASSADOR TO GOD

Continued from page 7

Virgin in Red Square. And Stalin, as F. I. Philippov is well aware, is still around.

But Philippov's job is also extremely important. The Politburo may not like God; but the Communist flood-tide of recent years has carried the hammer and sickle into regions where there are a great many people who do. Neither Marx, years ago thinking up Communism's theory in the gas-lit reading-room of the British Museum, nor Lenin, years later putting it into practice, ever said what the Communist did when on an international scale he came up against forces like the Vatican and the World Council of Churches. One of Philippov's many cares is to find an answer.

Theoretically, whenever Communist policy comes up against religious faith, a case of the irresistible force meeting the immovable object, the resultant impact ought to start a battle. In fact, it is not nearly as simple as that. So the fomentation of a religious war, hot or cold, is not one of Philippov's aims. His aim is to tame religion.

He knows that the Kremlin has learned to be cautious with world Christian opinion, and has learned the hard way. He remembers that some of the severest blows to their prestige and reputation that the Russian Communists have suffered have arisen from mistakes made in their sometimes ham-fisted handling of religious affairs.

Support For Russian Church

Inside Russia itself the going is easier. Relations with the five-hundred-year-old Russian Orthodox Church are excellent—better than they have been since the Revolution. Lenin may have declared—and these are his words—"all contemporary religions and Churches, all and every kind of religious organization, Marxism has always viewed as organs of bourgeois reaction." But Alexei, Patriarch of All the Russias, told Reuter's correspondent two years ago that his Church had Stalin's "benevolent support."

So the bells clash again from the onion-shaped domes of eight thousand re-opened churches. And there is evidence that the Russians have been startlingly glad to hear them.

Here is a change indeed. High among the causes has been the obstinately religious character of the Russian rank-and-file. No people in world history has been subjected to so intense a barrage of anti-religious propaganda. Yet it just does not seem to have worked. In 1933 a high Communist official reported with displeasure that, after fifteen years of official godlessness, the Leningrad Soviet estimated seventy-seven per cent of the farmers in their area to have icons (religious images) in their homes. He cautioned: "We must not believe that religion is finished in Russia, that it will die of itself. This is not true."

Godless League Disbanded

He was right. In return for the support of the Orthodox Church, and its doughty services rendered to morale during the war, the Kremlin called off anti-religious propaganda and disbanded the League of Militant Godless. If he wants to—and he certainly appears to—Ivan and his wife, if not Party members, can go to church again, and no one will take their names.

But there are two sides to every bargain. This revived Russian Church, cruelly persecuted in the past, has been doing very well for the Kremlin's expansionist policies. The Uniate Church of Western Ukraine, with a membership of three million, has joined up with Russian Orthodoxy at long last. And in its Patriarch, the Orthodox Churches of the Middle East and South Eastern Europe have a glittering focal point to draw their attentions.

However, if all this gives pleasure to Philippov, the embarrassing number of priests and ministers led off to jail from Iron Curtain countries does not. It looks far too much like direct religious persecution. In Budapest they put the saintly, widely-respected Lutheran Bishop Ordass in the dock on a charge of "currency manipulation." The currency was alleged to be funds collected in the U.S.A. on behalf of his Church. The verdict was "guilty." One who was present testified: "The reading of the sentence was heard by all the worker-judges with downcast eyes. When it was finished, they and the

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president of the court rose and left the room immediately. They must have known they had condemned an innocent man."

Why do it then? Philippov would no doubt hasten to explain that the currency was dollars. And then he would buzz for the file of what the secret police said they discovered when they entered Hungarian religious houses to carry off 322 priests and 600 nuns. The objects *described* to workers and peasants living near the religious houses, at special meetings convened just after the arrests, represent with one addition the familiar stock-in-trade of any smear campaign. They included "secret radio transmitters, women's clothing, pornographic pictures and figures, quantities of foreign currency, *especially dollars.*"

In other words, it is ties with the West, but notably with America, which can get the Churches into trouble.

Dread Label, "Reactionary"

But there are other ways of arousing Philippov's displeasure. Churches must not be unduly identified, in sympathies or actions, with the state of affairs before the Red Star loomed over the eastern skyline. To do this is to attract the dread label, "reactionary."

Thus, at the much advertised trial of Cardinal Mindszenty, a good deal was made of the fact that His Eminence had been connected with monarchist circles. A less prominent point was the vastly more important one that he was opposed to the new State's taking over of schools.

Church opposition to any of the projects of the new régime, such as "land reform," can have dire consequences. Some of the toughest opposition to the relentless liquidation of the kulaks, or individual farmer class, in Russia itself, came from the clergy who were in many cases closely related by blood to these same doomed farmers and their way of life. The kulaks are gone. But Philippov has not forgotten how the clergy fought for and with them in their dying days.

Thou shalt not look westwards. Thou shalt not look backwards. Thou shalt not get in the way of that which is sure it is moving forwards. Such would seem to be the three main commandments brought to the Churches by Philippov, this new Moses from the Kremlin, Communism's holy mountain.

Provided they are obeyed, Philippov appears quite ready to go on being pleased—and tolerant. It is certainly true that a good deal of levelling-down has been done. Where recognition is given, it is granted to all denominations equally.

Freedom To Worship

Here is the testimony given this year by the Reverend Imre Somogyi, President of the Baptists in Hungary. Of the end of the war, when the Russians drove into Budapest, he says: "The streets of the capital were still littered with corpses, we still walked on broken glass, when we crawled up from the cellars and saw the first order of the Soviet city commander. One of the points was this: 'The holding of divine services in churches and chapels will not be hindered.'"

That seems fair enough. But is it? Freedom to worship there may be. The trouble begins when the Churches will not rest content solely with the other world but persist in being interested in this. In other words, Philippov can tolerate God so long as He is kept bottled up in the safe obscurity of stained glass and murmured prayers. But his department will fight God very hard when He comes out into the world to influence people's actions.

Philippov has an arch-enemy—the Vatican, representing the mighty world power of the Roman Catholic Church. The stronger the Catholic Church, the sharper and more uncompromising has been the conflict in any area into which the Red tide has advanced. Here, at least, is war to the death. To whose death? That remains to be seen as this strange conflict continues.

One thing above all else, official Communism's apparently unbreakable habit of saying rude things about religion, makes Philippov's life a hard one. It must take some doing—like being music-master in a school for the deaf—to represent ecclesiastical relations for a government which does not in its heart of hearts think there ought to be any.

But Philippov struggles on, a patient top-level civil servant going to the office every morning to try to smooth out some more tangles between the world's Churches and the biggest atheist Power the world has seen. And meanwhile, even if accidentally, he represents every day the most impressive series of challenges ever issued to the Churches.

A Three-fold Challenge

Challenge number one is to prove by results that Communism is wrong in labelling religion as dope. Challenge two is to prove false, by an outburst of new life within themselves, the cynical assumption that the Churches can be relied upon to fade away, gently ushered by Philippov's department into little, harmless, hymn-singing coteries. Challenge three is to avoid getting identified overmuch with either Wall Street or Moscow.

The real struggle is for the soul of mankind. F. I. Philippov no doubt believes it will be watched only by the interested parties on either side. The Churches believe it will be watched with compassion but justice by Someone to whom the whole bunch—all of us, including Philippov, including even Philippov's boss, Stalin—are just a lot of funny little creatures, of whom for private reasons He is rather fond, crawling around on one of the planets.

His name is God. THE END

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Face up to it

WHEN times are bad and life oppresses us, is it right to put the blame entirely on events? If so, we admit that we are at the mercy of things over which we have no control.

To put the blame on events when things go wrong with us is just an alibi. It's not the events that matter. It's our attitude to them—even more, our attitude to ourselves.

The only sure defence against the impact of events is an honest admission of our own *motives*.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

LIVING LANGUAGE

by George Beardmore

WHY WE SAY . . .

MIND YOUR P's AND Q's

ONE origin of this saying comes from France. In the days of Louis XIV dancing masters would warn their pupils to mind their *pieds* (feet) and *queues* (wig-tails). Otherwise dancers were liable to lose their wigs when making elaborate bows.

The English ale house offers another explanation. Publicans once kept a score of their customers' drinks. "P" chalked on a slate meant Pint, "Q" stood for Quart. "Mind your P's and Q's" was a warning to the over-thirsty that their credit was running out.

TIN WHISTLE FOR CHRISTMAS

Continued from page 10

learned to row. And Thomas the Onions, so called because his mother ran away with a Breton onion seller.

These three gathered together in the house of David the Postman a fortnight before Christmas. And it was David who explained the plan.

"We must do something about Pugh Esquire, my friends. No sense or reason in any man ignoring so deliberately the spirit of Christmas."

Thomas the Onions was a gentle man. He was doubtful now of this suggestion.

"But why not let the man be in peace, eh, Shone?"

Shone had the distinction of being an expert on the tin whistle. Always his lips were pursed below his thick moustache. He now shook his head.

"I do agree with David. Indeed, it is wrong that any leftover of the gentry should stand as odd man out at Christmas. It disturbs me."

Thomas the Onions was still doubtful, saying that every man was entitled to his own odd ways. But Christmas, as the other two pointed out to him, was a time of goodwill and enjoyment, and, as Shone said, even the mad in the institutions have their Christmas puddings.

David the Postman then explained his scheme, and all agreed to help.

IT was a white, swirling Christmas Eve. There was a half-moon which gave shadow to the many trees, and the peeling gilt work on the top of the gates gleamed a little.

The three paused a moment before the gate of The Hall. Shone and Thomas were not over-keen now that the time had come for this business. Even David himself was a little anxious. But he said, quickly: "Come, let us go in."

He tried to open the small iron side gate, that which was always open, but which this Christmas Eve had been locked with a rusty chain and padlock.

Reluctantly, they climbed over, and stood breathing heavily just inside the drive.

"Let us put on our robes, friends," said David.

They opened small suitcases. David had brought an old dressing-gown and Thomas the Onions an old coat of his tall wife. Shone the Half-Fisherman had an old B.A. gown left over since the day when the County School master had lodged at his house.

A hundred yards from the house Shone took out his tin whistle and wanted to play. David the Postman had to explain to him, 'at great length and bitterly, that they were supposed to be Wise Men and not Snake Charmers.

It was David who knocked on the door. A great echo inside, as if the noise was running from room to room. But no one came. He knocked again.

Instantly a great chain rattled and a lock was turned back. The door opened boldly and in the pale moonlight the three of them saw that it was Old Pugh Esquire.

He also, as if to be a fourth Wise Man, had on an old dressing-gown. His face was white and the end of his short, pointed beard dropped a little sadly below his mouth as he looked at them. In his hand was a silver-headed walking cane.

"Who are you?" asked the old man.

David the Postman had been rehearsing this bit. He raised his voice to a falsetto and gave it an oriental twang. "We are from the East," said David. "Three Wise Men come to visit you this Christmas Eve to interview you about your disregard of Christmas."

Old Pugh tapped on the floor with his cane. "Oh, I see. Well, which is better, gentlemen—to be generous for fifty-one weeks of the year and miserly for one? Or to be like all other men, giving only at Christmas?"

DURING the silence, Shone sneezed. On the instant Old Pugh upended his cane and held it at arm's length. "You, Wise Man, what is your name?"

Shone answered, without thought: "Shone, sir."

Old Pugh seemed satisfied, but pointed afterwards with his cane at Thomas the Onions. He, poor man, seemed to know what was coming, for on the instant he picked up the hem of the long coat and ran away down the steps. The last they saw of him was the way he ran down the drive, falling once and leaving most blasphemous words to come up on the wind from the west.

Only two Wise Men now to deal with Old Pugh and this matter of Christmas. David the Postman could feel the ache in his throat as he tried to raise his voice to the unnatural pitch to speak.

But before he could do so, Old Pugh Esquire laughed and suddenly reached out a scraggy finger to Shone the Half-Fisherman. Like some mighty bird the old man clawed poor Shone towards him and pulled him through the doorway.

David the Postman tried to save his friend, but it all happened so suddenly, and the door was slammed in his face as he went forward. After that there came a muffled shouting

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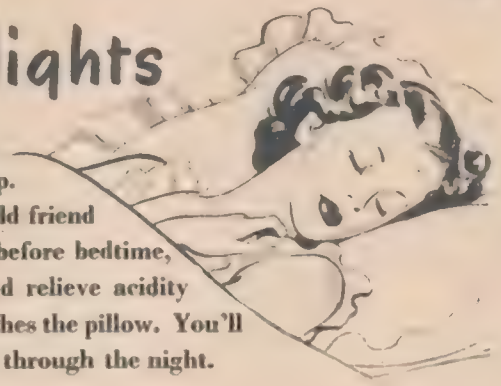

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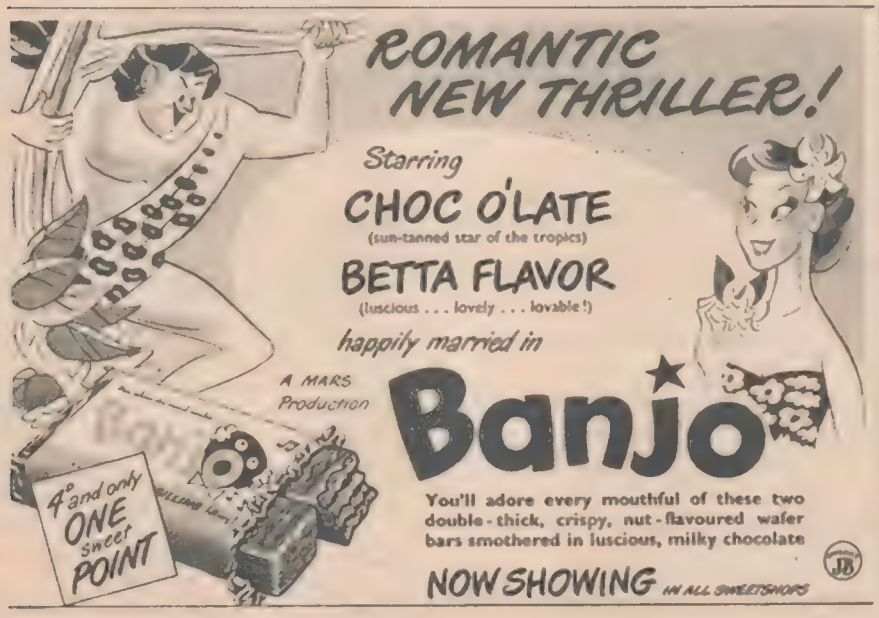
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from the hallway, the voice of Shone begging for mercy.

David stood by the door until all was still. And then he went down the drive to find Thomas the Onions.

It took some time for the postman to make him understand what had happened. And when he did understand, Thomas the Onions wanted to run at once to the village. David pulled him back.

"This way, man, back to The Hall and to the rescue."

Thomas was not for the venture, saying that his wife was expecting him home by ten and that one sacrificed out of three was quite enough. But David insisted, and so they went up the drive again.

It was in the deep darkness that they heard the piercing yet melancholy playing of a tin whistle on the night air. They both paused. The tune being played was oddly out of place on such a night and in such a situation. It was "The Lambeth Walk," but played, not with gay abandon, but in a slow, sad, mournful way.

Thomas held up a hand to the moon, like a confessor at a meeting of sinners. "'Tis his ghost, David. Never has Shone played at that pace before." Thomas's teeth rattled. "Christmas ghost."

David the Postman, too, had difficulty with his words, although this was chiefly due to the sweat which was dropping from the end of his nose into his mouth. He spoke hastily, he who had been so brave this night. "Let us go, friend."

These sweet words were the ones Thomas had been waiting for since the start of this affair. He turned and started to run. David the Postman, in one moment of doubt, followed him.

Once they were in the roadway, they waited, fearfully looking up the drive sometimes and expecting the music to be heard. But they seemed to have outrun it for the time being.

IT was while they were waiting that the phut-phut of an autocycle came along the road. It was the sweetest sound that these two had ever heard; for there was only one man in the whole parish who had such a means of transport, the Vicar himself.

The two men knew that if the Vicar came all the little devils and the perverse satans of the other world could not touch them this Christmas Eve. Even their late friend Shone, with his tin whistle, could be exorcised and sent happily to that especial resting place which is reserved for musicians, good and bad.

It was indeed the Vicar, on his way to a small private jollification with the rector of the next parish. He was not over-pleased to be stopped. "What do you want, my friends?" he asked rather testily.

David the Postman pointed up the long avenue to the Hall. "Do you hear that, sir?"

The Vicar cocked his head on one side to listen. "It is some musical instrument. Pray, what is it?"

In a rush of words Thomas the Onions and David the Postman told the Vicar all about the escapade. How their good friend Shone had been captured; and how doubtless it was his spirit playing its funeral march in memory of the late attached body.

As they told him, the music became louder and they could hear footsteps. David and Thomas covered up their eyes and kept their bodies tensed ready to run away.

When the music was quite close at hand, the Vicar spoke quietly. "Gentlemen, it is all right."

Slowly the two uncovered and opened their eyes.

An object too much like Shone of the flesh to be any other was playing the tin whistle. Behind him, walking slowly and in time with the music, was Old Pugh Esquire. Docile as a lamb behind its mother walked Pugh Esquire. He had his hands behind his back, his head just a little to the one side, his features set in the expression which resembles the angels of old paintings. This Lambeth Walk tune seemed to soothe him.

The Vicar gave a greeting. "Good evening, Mr. Pugh, and to you, Mr. Shone. A merry Christmas to you both."

They both ignored him, Shone playing and Pugh Esquire smiling sweetly. Shone's eyes rolled fearfully so that the whites showed, and he raised his free hand as a mythical screwdriver to tighten some imaginary nut in his head, and after that he pointed violently over his shoulder to the old man.

Then they understood. The old squire must be mad; the music soothed him.

THEY tried to open the gates, but the lock held firm. Eventually they got Shone over the top, he playing his instrument valiantly all the time. Meekly Old Pugh Esquire followed. On the main road they started to march towards the village, Shone leading the way and Old Pugh Esquire just behind with Thomas on one side and David on the other. The Vicar started up his machine, turned it around and hastened on to Cantref for help.

The three men who had gone out to play a joke on this contrary old man had to bring him in, a captive madman. Shone played until six strong men had taken hold of the old squire and the van came, yellow and efficient in the moonlight. With the end of the music, Old Pugh Esquire started to struggle most dreadfully.

It was a sad story. The old man, it seems, was about to attack Shone inside The Hall when the Half-Fisherman, in a panic, began to play slowly. It soothed the old man, calmed his apparent madness. Mad he must surely be, for have not the doctor and a J.P., the Vicar and a policeman agreed on that?

Yet there is some doubt given expression on winter nights around fireplaces in the parish. We who give only at Christmas are counted sane; the old squire who gave all the year round is certified mad. For to follow a tin whistle in the moonlight on Christmas Eve hardly puts a man on the side of the angels. THE END

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"SANATOGEN" Tonic Wine is an admirable restorative for it combines the "pick-me-up" qualities of a rich, full-bodied wine with the active tonic properties of "SANATOGEN" Nerve Tonic.

The word "SANATOGEN" is a Registered Trade Mark.

8/- PER BOTT.
4/6 HALF BOTT.

CVS-124

For Smart Healthy Hair

Good grooming plays a big part in the sort of impression you make — and smart, healthy hair is essential to good grooming. For this reason smart men the world over enjoy the *double benefit* of Brylcreem: **(1) Day-long smartness. (2) Lasting hair-health.** Massaged well into the scalp, Brylcreem gives the roots a chance, encouraging natural hair growth. Its pure, emulsified oils spread evenly over the head, removing Dandruff and giving life and lustre to Dry Hair. Brylcreem controls the hair without gumming, keeps it soft and glossy all through the day. Be well groomed — Brylcreem *your* hair, too. Brylcreem is in tubs, jars, and tubes, 2/- and large size economy tubs 3/9d.

BRYLCREEM

the perfect hair dressing

County Perfumery Co. Ltd., Stanmore, Middx. royds 18 86

New sweet treat for the Christmas stockings...

SPANGLES

Made by MARS

"Carnival Queen"

CROWNS THE PARTY SCENE!

says Mrs. Crisp

and it's simple to make!

Here's a *really* regal party dish, says Mrs. Crisp. Lovely to look at, delicious to taste and simple to make! Just the thing for the festive season. and the crowning glory of *any* party table! *A Weetabix recipe, of course.*

WHAT YOU NEED...

- 1 PACKET GREENGAGE OR ORANGE JELLY
- 1 PINT VANILLA CUSTARD
- 6-8 WEETABIX
- RASPBERRY JAM
- ALMOND ESSENCE
- 1 TABLESPOON CASTOR SUGAR
- ½-¾ PINT MOCK CREAM
- GLACÉ CHERRIES & ANGELICA FOR DECORATION

MOCK CREAM.—Dissolve ½ oz. best powdered gelatine in 3 tablespoons hot water, add one teaspoon sugar and ½-teaspoon vanilla essence. Slightly warm a tin of evaporated milk, turn into a large bowl and stir the gelatine mixture into it. When cold, whip and store in a cold place. Before heaping on "Carnival Queen," whip well again.

WHAT YOU DO...

1. Make the jelly, *using a tablespoon more water than directed on the packet*, and leave to cool.
2. Prepare custard—not too thick—and similarly leave to cool.
3. Split the Weetabix, sandwich them generously with raspberry or other berry jam, and place on the bottom of a large shallow glass dish.
4. Work 2–3 drops almond essence into the sugar, and sprinkle over and between the Weetabix. Pour the cooling jelly on top.
5. Wait for a few minutes until jelly is firm enough for the custard, then pour custard on top and cover with the whipped synthetic or mock cream.
6. Decorate with glacé cherries and strips of angelica as shown in the illustration.

THIS RECIPE SERVES 8-10 PEOPLE

isn't it wonderful what Weetabix will make!

SO MUCH MORE THAN A BREAKFAST FOOD

Yes. Weetabix certainly is the cereal with a difference! Not only a grand breakfast dish with hot or cold milk—really nourishing, easily digested and *goodness all through*—but a store-cupboard stand-by for *all sorts* of exciting snacks, savouries and sweets. You're never at a loss for something tasty when Weetabix is in the house!

look for the brighter pack

Weetabix

FREE SAMPLE Write to Mrs. Crisp at 3N, Constantia House, Burton Latimer, Northants, for a free sample of Weetabix *and* a copy of her recipe folder. You'll find *both* useful!

WHEAT, MALT, EXTRA SUGAR AND SALT CRISPLY TOASTED

THE DESPERATE WOMAN

Continued from page 14

head. "Change," she whispered. "For God's sake, change. I brought you working clothes. They're the least conspicuous."

He withdrew into the back of the shack, and Anne sat down on a log of wood. All the things she had forbidden herself to think now burst from her lips. "You haven't a chance, don't you know it? Not a chance. Any minute now, the alarm will go out. The German police, the Allied police, everybody will start looking for you. Who will believe that you are innocent now? You've spoiled every chance we ever had. Now they will say that your escape proves you are a criminal. Oh, Simeon, what did you do? Why did you do it?"

"I haven't killed anyone," he said. "It was quite easy in the end, much easier than I thought." He told her about Becker, tied up in his cell, unhurt, and the guards who, without questioning, had let him pass the gate.

For a moment her heart ached with relief, but the respite was short. "When they find you, you'll be tried for using force against a guard. Years will be added to your sentence."

"They are not going to find me."

In the semi-darkness of their hiding-place she tried to look at him, tried to read his face. There was savagery in his eyes, something she had never seen there before, and a deadly determination in his voice she couldn't remember ever having heard.

He went on harshly: "You are not trying to tell me to turn back, to walk over to the next policeman and give myself up?"

She was silent.

"Anne," he demanded. "Are you going to let me down or will you help me?"

"I'll help you," she whispered. "Of course. What else could I do?"

"Nobody must know that you've seen me. You'll be questioned. Leave for Paris this afternoon as you had planned. In Paris get me a French passport, somehow. I'll be a French business man from now on. Post it to me from France. Poste restante, Hamburg. I'll expect you in Hamburg in a week at the latest. You'll find word from me in Hamburg, poste restante."

THEY were used to this game. It had been bitter necessity for years, a part of their lives, as familiar to them as a game of musical chairs to children. She said: "And you?"

"I'm going to try for Hamburg. Paul was stationed there for a short time before they put him on a submarine. His first mate, Erwin Bohlen, used to live there. I only remembered his name last night. Perhaps he still does, or some of the crew who served with Paul. Someone there might know his whereabouts, if he is in Germany."

His voice was cold and sure. "I'll write to you in French," he went on. "Under a fake name, of course. Paraffe. Charles Paraffe. Have the passport made out in that name. I'm dealing in pharmaceutics. Can you remember? And what about money?"

"Here." She opened her bag, and gave him what she had.

He looked at the luminous dial of the watch she had given him on her last visit, in August. "You'd better go now. If you don't find news from me in Hamburg, you'll know it's all over."

She understood the veiled threat and her heart began to beat fast. She put out her hand and touched his. He smiled. "They won't get me alive," he said. "Not ever again. I'll either be free or dead."

Then he bent quickly and kissed her, but before she had time to respond, she felt herself pushed gently through the door. For a moment she stood there, dazed as in a dream, then without looking back she started to walk away.

WHEN she entered the Four Seasons, Robert Sawyer rose from a chair close to the swinging door. "Where in the world have you been?"

He was fair and tall, with merry blue eyes which, in an instant, could narrow into cold, piercing arrows. It was a face combining strength and kindliness, but his easy-going ways, she felt, were a mask behind which he hid.

Gaily, she swung her parcels. "Shopping," she said. "It is such a beautiful morning. Don't you know women always buy things when they feel depressed?" She turned around in a half-circle for him to look her over, her new dress, her hair bouncing on her shoulders, her eyes smiling, but watching him all the time. "How do you like it?"

"Anne," he said, catching one of her outstretched hands. "There's something I have to tell you. The police are here. I don't suppose you've heard yet. It was on the wireless—your friend escaped from prison last night."

The parcels dropped from her hand. She closed her eyes.

"I thought so," he said. "I was sure you knew nothing about it. Still you will have to tell them that. You saw him yesterday. Do you want me to stay?"

The police were waiting for her. The questioning lasted only a few minutes. Yes, Rodasky had seemed very depressed. Yes, she could swear she hadn't brought him any tools. Here a policeman looked at his report and nodded affirmation—yes, she had gone out early this morning. Could she name the stores? She could. She was horrified, shaken by the news, and completely believable.

Even Bob believed her, Bob who had known her now for two years. He ordered coffee to be sent up to her room, poured it for her, buttered a roll for her and, when she shook her head, held out his cigarette case without prodding her to eat.

"If you want some advice, Anne, if I were you, I'd leave. I'd leave on the four o'clock as you'd planned. No doubt Rodasky will try to contact you. He needs help. Without you he'll be lost. We'll have him in a few days at the most. And you don't want to be involved, Anne. You mustn't get involved in this."

"Are you and the Americans looking for him, too?" she said, a little bitterly. "I thought you were too busy with other affairs."

"I am a British intelligence officer attached to the U.S. Forces. The Americans are interested in this case—very interested—and so am I."

She rose, pushing back her chair with an almost violent gesture. His eyes followed her across the room, followed the movements of her body, which had attracted and excited him from the first.

He said angrily: "I'm not asking you to drop his affairs, although I think you're stupid beyond reason. Just leave so that you, too, won't get into difficulties which even I would be unable to straighten out. Come back if you have to, later, when we've got him safe behind bars again."

Anne shook her head. Sawyer rose, walked over to her, and put his hand on her shoulder. "There is another reason why you should go," he said softly, "if not for my sake. Don't you realize that you are under surveillance? Even if you tried to help him it would just lead us straight to him."

Anne began to tremble. She hadn't thought about that.

MINK could never get enough sweets, all kinds of sweets. Perhaps her craving for sweets originated from her childhood when, as a little girl, she had stood in the barren stores, staring at the empty display boxes on which were portrayed, in all their lusciousness, milk chocolate, marzipan, sour and sweet drops. She also collected little cushions with big bows or lace edges, in all colours, sizes and shapes, and huge toy animals such as one could buy in night clubs or win in dancing competitions.

She, herself, looked like a toy. She was eighteen, tiny and round, with a child's face and complexion, round, expressionless doll's eyes, made larger and even more doll-like by the long, false lashes glued to her rather heavy lids. She had a finely shaped, slightly tilted nose and very even, sharp little teeth. She favoured black lace underwear, not only because it was her idea of luxury, but also because it didn't show the dirt. More than anything in the world she wanted a mink coat. "A mink. A mink. Can't you buy me a little mink?" That was why her friends called her Mink.

Mink lay on the floor in front of the fireplace, surrounded by magazines, newspapers, and boxes of chocolates. When she saw all the elegant designs of dresses and the pictures of well-groomed ladies in the fashion magazines, she felt cheated by life, but when she glanced at the "Situations wanted" columns and tried to imagine just how many people were out of work, and remembered Valentin mentioning that the figures of the unemployed were rising steadily, she felt strangely consoled.

Her eyes, choosing a page here, a page there, a lemon drop to be crushed between her teeth or a soft chocolate-coated brandy cherry to melt in her mouth, lighted on a photograph in the evening paper: "MURDERER ESCAPES FROM FELSECK."

Nice face, she thought. Doesn't look like a criminal. She turned the page, skimmed through the story, the description. No reward was being offered yet.

It didn't interest her any longer, but the word "reward" made her turn a few more pages. Maybe somebody had lost something and was ready to pay a nice sum to the lucky finder.

As she held the paper closer, a four-figure sum glared at her. A thousand dollars, in any currency. A thousand dollars! With the money she had put away and was hiding from Valentin, she might be able to buy the coat.

Mink began to day-dream. She saw herself dressed in the beloved fur, she could feel its softness under her palms. Oh, delicious, delicious dreams! Only it would never happen to her. Nobody would ever pay her 1,000 dollars. Never would she find the thing for which the owner was ready to part with such a sum.

She read on. She scratched herself behind her little ears. Sweat began to form on her upper lip. "Anyone," she read aloud, "giving precise information which leads to either of the following persons, will be paid, in cash . . . Paul Jablonsky." She didn't know a Paul Jablonsky. "Anton Woiczi, Red Kruck," and there it was, the name her eager eyes had spotted before she had actually begun to read the advertisement. "Valentin Slada."

She didn't believe it. She rubbed her forehead, she blinked her eyes. No. It was no mistake. There it was, black on white. In print. Valentin Slada. She spelled it aloud. V-a-l-e-n-t-i-n S-l-a-d-a. Only Valentin didn't want to be called Slada. His name was Winter now.

Mink sat back on her fat little knees. Valentin wouldn't like it. He was funny about this name business. Actually he had never told her about it until the day she'd come across it. The card had dated back to the year he had spent in a D.P. camp. Then he had explained.

Now that she thought of it, she didn't really like Valentin. It was just that he was saving up money and waiting for a chance to emigrate to America, where there were more mink coats than anywhere else in the world. This 1,000 dollars might help towards it. Tonight she'd talk to

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*

him about it, she'd show him the advertisement. Then she remembered that she wanted the money for herself. Maybe once she had a mink coat she wouldn't be so eager to marry Valentin and go to America. With a mink coat, Berlin could be a nice place, too.

Mink got up. She found pen and ink and paper. Then she returned to her place on the polar bear rug. First she wrote the envelope—the number was long and complicated—but the letter was easy.

ANNE was three days late. Standing in line in the main Hamburg post office, she bought a few stamps at the retail window before making her way slowly to the window marked, "Poste Restante."

Writing her name on a slip of paper, she pushed it through the grille. The assistant went to the pigeonhole shelf. With maddening slowness his fingers tapped along the boxes marked alphabetically. From under the "T" he took a small bunch, brought it over, licked his thumb and began to sort them. The last one was hers.

"Thank you." Anne reached out her hand and stopped short, for, at the very moment when her fingers touched the envelope, a voice behind her said: "What a small world it is. I didn't expect to meet you here."

She swung round, leaving the letter on the counter where the assistant had pushed it. Behind her stood Robert Sawyer. She didn't need to feign surprise. "Why, it's you, Bob!"

She took his arm, intending to walk away from the window, but the assistant called out after her. "*Fräuleinchen,* you forgot your letter."

For a second she felt lost, then, gently, she took it and put it in her bag. "Thanks."

Together they walked through the crowded post office and out into the street. And because there mustn't be a silence between them, Anne said: "Quite a few things have happened during the last two weeks. I think I'm finally getting somewhere."

"Anne," he said, "why did you come to Hamburg?"

"I will go to any place to which a trace leads."

"But who knew you were coming here and could write to you?"

Anne stopped short. "Are you shadowing me, Bob? I thought you had more important things to do. What if I told you it is none of your business who writes to me?"

"Then I would tell you that I am making it my business."

They looked at each other, but neither face showed any expression. He stopped, hailed a taxi, and a small car pulled up at the kerb. "Let's go somewhere and have a drink, or something."

In the taxi, he said casually: "I suppose you realize it is only a matter of days before we get Rodasky."

Suddenly she could not control her temper. "You'll never get him, Bob. You don't know him. He'll kill himself before he'll let himself be caught."

"That would be the only decent thing he could do if he loves you."

It was then she remembered Simeon's last words. *They won't get me alive . . . I'll either be free or dead.* Suddenly she found a deeper meaning in his words and her heart seemed to miss a beat.

The taxi stopped. They walked along the Alster and found a free table in a new restaurant near where the *Pavillon* had once stood.

"Just coffee, no drink for me," she told him, and when the waiter had gone and come back with their order, she looked at Sawyer calmly, and with new strength. Just before she had taken the plane from Paris she had posted Simeon the necessary papers to cross the Russian Zone and enter Berlin at Helmstedt, together with a copy of Mink's letter and a note from herself telling him that she would go to Berlin at once and contact her there at the *Pension* Sunbeam. And this morning, upon her arrival in Hamburg, she had posted a second letter with money.

"We don't trust each other any longer, do we?" she asked Sawyer.

He looked at her, almost coldly: "What brought you here?"

"One of my lawyer's inquiries was answered. A man who served with Jablonsky on the same submarine is supposed to live here. And I thought I would see him myself."

"You know his name?"

"Bohlen, Erwin Bohlen."

HE fished the olive out of his martini and dropped it into the ashtray. "Anne," he said. "It is quite within the realm of possibility that Rodasky wrote to you in Paris, asking you to come to Hamburg to bring him false papers, money, anything, perhaps because he wanted to make inquiries here himself. . . ."

"Possible, yes," she said. "But don't forget, Bob, that it was you who warned me that the police might try to trap him by watching my every move. In that case I wouldn't have come myself. I would have mailed him whatever he wanted. I thought you were in Intelligence, not in a detective bureau."

"At times it overlaps," he said. "That's what's so nasty about it." And unexpectedly he pointed to her bag. "From whom is that letter?"

She was certain, suddenly, that if she didn't tell him, he would use his authority to force whatever she knew out of her. She was cornered. So, with a quick, annoyed gesture, she opened her bag and tossed the letter at him unopened.

Simeon had once been a master at composing letters which said nothing yet told everything. She had no choice but to depend on that, as she had depended on him during the long, dangerous years underground.

Sawyer held the letter in his hand, turning it between his fingers. For the first time she saw that the address was typewritten. He tore open the letter.

"'Anne, dearest,'" he read aloud. "'I told you that I would be here until about the eighteenth, and try to find out for you whatever I could. Well, here it is and not very hopeful, I'm afraid. Shortly after the war, apparently, Bohlen got into an argument in a bar with some men from his crew. In the ensuing fight he was so badly hurt that he died. There ends the trace. Let me tell you again that I think this whole case is hopeless. Simeon will never be able to prove his innocence. I believe his story but I am afraid, except for you and me, nobody else can ever be convinced. Anne, don't waste your life, I beg of you. You are, and always will be, the only woman I love, and it is because I love you so much that I feel I must be brutally frank.'"

Sawyer looked up at her for a moment, then went on reading. "'With his escape he has forfeited any right to you. It can be only a question of days now until he will be found, and in that time he will not be able to prove anything. If you don't want to ruin your life, and it horrifies me to think you might, face facts. Don't be a coward now, Anne. As I know Simeon, he will in the end have no alternative left but death. Forget him. All he ever wanted was your happiness. Remember that. I will not be here then. I don't think we will ever meet again. It is too painful. I am leaving at two o'clock on Tuesday. God bless you.'"

Nothing was said for a moment. Then Sawyer added: "Just 'C' for a signature. I'm sorry, Anne."

SHE stared out of the window. Simeon had told her all there was to tell. That the trace he had hoped to find had vanished into thin air, that he had given up all hope and realized at last the dangerous consequences his escape could have for her. And he had also told her that he would be at the main station on the eighteenth, at two o'clock, and asked her not to come.

"I could have written the letter myself," said Sawyer.

Anne was thinking desperately. It was Tuesday, the eighteenth of October and ten minutes past one. The letters she had posted to Simeon yesterday couldn't have arrived before this morning.

Simeon had waited three days in vain. Had he thought she had failed him—failed him when he needed her most? Perhaps she had given him the impression that she didn't trust in him any more.

"You're pale," Sawyer said. "Anne, I didn't know he meant so much to you. I always thought that perhaps one day I'd. . . ."

If only Simeon hadn't given up hope! If only he had continued to go to the post office and ask for mail, then today he would have been handed the letters with everything he needed in them, and more than he had hoped for—the news that Valentin Slada had been found. If only he had gone back again! Had he gone back again?

She stood up suddenly. "In case you intend to follow me," she said, "I'm going to Berlin tomorrow."

"I'm going to be in Berlin, too," he said. "Have to be there by the end of this week on business. In case you need me, just call my office. And I'm sorry, Anne."

Anne reached the main station, or, rather, what was left of it, at exactly ten minutes to two. She waited until three o'clock, walking along the platforms, through the waiting-room, up to the newspaper stand and inquiring at various ticket windows for trains she would never take. But she did not see Simeon.

ON Thursday morning, shortly after ten o'clock, Anne stood in front of the apartment house in which, according to Mink's note, Valentin Slada lived under the name of Valentin Winter.

She had not answered Mink's letter nor called her, although that was what the girl had asked her to do: "Just ask for Mink, and don't talk to anybody else about it if this is really important to you."

Since she had arrived in Berlin, Anne had fought a constant battle with herself not to pick up the telephone and ask the one, vital question—if, by chance, anyone else had yet called Mink concerning that little private matter of the reward. Her reason warned her that she might be watched.

As she was about to enter the house, another thought occurred to her. What if Simeon had decided that she should no longer be involved and was going to proceed from now on on his own? If so, this was the only place to which he might come, where she might, therefore, ever find him again, and also the only place to which he should not go. She had to wait.

Never, she thought, starting to walk again, never must Mink see him. Mink who, as her childishly phrased note had revealed, saw nothing wrong in betraying a man's confidence for a reward, who might recognize in Simeon the escaped prisoner and, since there was now a price on his head, would certainly want that money, too.

At one o'clock she decided she could afford to lose no more time. A caretaker answered her ring at the front door, a big, fat woman, poorly dressed, who apparently had just been doing her laundry, for she smelled strongly of soap, and her apron was wet. She didn't bother to look at Anne, but Anne knew that women like her, to all appearances so unconcerned, had a special memory for faces.

"The Winter apartment?"

"Three stairs up and to the left. Apartment B. The lift doesn't work."

When she knocked, an eye appeared in the peephole and, since the hole was so small and round, it looked as if the door suddenly and miraculously possessed an eye. Then the door was opened but the iron chain inside remained fastened. This made a slit not wide enough, however, for Anne to insert a foot.

"Who is it?" The voice was child-like, a little high.

"May I speak to Fräulein Mink?"

"I am Mink."

"You answered an advertisement in the paper," Anne said softly.

The chain was pulled back and fell

NOW YOU KNOW

WHY pay a fancy price every year for a Christmas tree? If you bought a tree with a good root to it you can use it again next year—and have the pleasure of watching it grow.

Water it during the holiday and plant it in the garden after Boxing Day. It will thrive in most types of soil but deep sandy loam is best.

But replanting shop trees is chancy. It's better to buy a small spruce early next year and plant it any time up to March. By the following Christmas it may have grown up to another six inches. If you lift it carefully, preserving the root and soil around it, you will have a good chance of replanting with success.

NICE SWEETS for NASTY THROATS

Suck MAC SWEETS For
COUGHS · COLDS · SORE THROATS
HOARSENESS · TONSILLITIS · LARYNGITIS · CATARRH

Soothing, relieving, delicious MAC SWEETS are the pleasant way of dealing with these winter ailments.

Whilst preserving an exciting 'tangy' flavour, each MAC SWEET contains a therapeutic dose of Amyl-Meta-Cresol, an antiseptic 250 times as strong as pure Phenol, the standard by which all new antiseptics are judged.

You can't help liking MAC SWEETS. Suck them in crowded places to resist infection. Let your husband take a few to work with him. Give some to the children when they go to school. They'll love them!

1'4 Per Packet (NO POINTS) From Chemists

MAC BRAND *Antiseptic Throat* SWEETS

A MACLEAN PRODUCT

COME TO OUR NEW YEAR PARTY!

TRIPLE 1st PRIZE

£500 CASH PLUS HAMPER

and Celebration Weekend

£50, £25—each plus Hamper and Celebration Weekend for Two

Winners and chosen companions will be invited to JOHN BULL'S New Year celebration party in London. Arrangements include conducted tour of London, trip to Windsor, seats for Olympia Circus and Celebration Party to meet Johnny Goodbullet, the *Bullets* bulldog and the famous ARCHIE ANDREWS.

(Extra cheque if preferred to Weekend Award.)

2 of £10, 5 of £5, 10 of £2.10s. each plus NEW YEAR HAMPER

30 NEW YEAR HAMPERS

2,000 PRIZES of 2s. 6d.

NOVEL SURPRISE BONUSES

—see coupon below

"A HAPPY and memorable weekend—and something to talk about in our old age!" That sums up the last *Bullets* Party in the words of First Prize-winner G. W. Bennett, of Wigan; in this picture you see him receiving congratulations from Wilfred Pickles.

Use some of your Christmas leisure to win your way, with a companion, to the *Bullets* New Year Party—and be congratulated on your £500 success by Johnny Goodbullet and Archie Andrews!

Wilfred Pickles congratulating "Bulleteer" G. W. Bennett at *Bullets* Birthday Party

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Baby 1951
In Winter's Grip
Our Right
To A Man
Must Be Strong
God Of Speed
At The Next Election
Deliberately
Gathering Of The Clans
Without Fear
Can't Be Too Careful, So
Going Grey
Domestic Pantomime
In Trouble
At The Hunt Ball
Mopped Up
A Woman's Intuition
Pins And Needles
Economizing
What Jones Said To Smith

Incomplete "Examples" see instructions

International .....
To Find.....
Listening For The .....
That .....Next Door
..... Object
Along Came The.....And

"Bullets" Winners 1,759

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Hamper: Mrs. H. E. Merry, The Common, Limpenhoe, Norwich: MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS AWES US—THAWS US.

£50 plus Hamper: S. W. Bewers, 48 Green Lane, Acomb, York: WORRYING HER—CUTS IN *Purse's* "POWER."

£25 plus Hamper: F. D. Harrison, 3 Gisburn Court, Morley, Yorks: MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS—AFTER NINETEEN CENTURIES—*Urgent*!

OTHER AWARDS: £20: G. B. Patrick, 21 Astley Crescent, Quinton, Birmingham: DETERMINED TO A—NICETY, BY RUSSIA—NASTINESS! £15: H. V. Lambshire, 121 Winlaton Road, Bromley, Kent: ADVERSITY'S ARROWS—STICK—IN THE STICK-IN-THE-MUD! £10: W. Stevenson, c/o 23 Bruce Street, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire: JUST WHAT JOE WANTED—"PUPPETS"—NEXT, "WHOLE SHOW"? £9: S. Long, 4 Albion Terrace, Carter Gate, Grimsby: WORLD THAT'S GONE—UNIONS *Still* SCARED OF? £8: A. W. Davis, 47 Draper Road, Christchurch, Hants: MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS—TOO "REVOLUTIONARY" FOR KREMLIN? £7: A. J. R. Cartwright, 27 Selbourne Avenue, New Haw, Weybridge: DECORATED WITH HOLLY—*Marking* SIXPENCE, SANDY'S PUDDING! £6: G. J. Jenkins, Ty Bryn, 5 New Road, Skewen, Neath: PRESENT FROM RUSSIA—PEACE?—NOT *Present* RUSSIA!

(Above 7 winners each also receives Hamper.)

For five winners of £5 plus Hamper, and five of £2 10s. plus Hamper, see *"Bullets" Bulletin* dated December 16.

Winners of 150 Fowls have been notified, and 2,000 2s. 6d. Postal Orders posted.

CASH AND FINE NEW XWORD PRIZES!

THIS WAY TO WIN

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues **XWORD 715**

2. There are occasions when the designs of these have to be changed
4. When weighing up merits of runners, you can't ignore this entirely
5. There are times when a father will give his son this
6. A few these can make a big hole in your cheese ration
8. On almost any good, large-scale, local map you'll find one indicated as such
9. One is unlikely to attack you without reason
12. This may describe an enclosure
13. A great many aren't on the level
14. Really heavy fall of snow makes travelling slower by this

Down Clues

1. You get a kind of this with mustard
3. Should have a good head
7. Trying to be diplomatic makes some men
9. Manufacturer of one realizes comfort isn't everything
10. They take withdrawals quite coolly
11. They are quite human whatever some people think

£100 FIRST PRIZE

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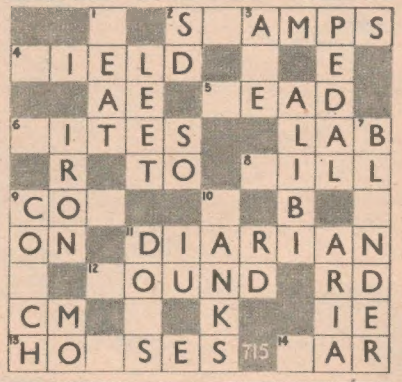
£100 WON OUTRIGHT XWORD 711

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Crowd or Crown. 3, Whim. 6, Bout. 9, Lap. 13, Strive. 14, Gaze. DOWN: 1, Cases. 2, Wood. 4, Head. 5, Strip. 7, Acid. 8, Lots. 10, Chill. 11, Moor. 12, Fog.

£100 OUTRIGHT WINNER: T. Farrell, 93 George Pope Road, Norwich. Winner also receives Grand Xmas Dinner.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 15 entrants, each of whom receives Xmas Fowl and Pudding in addition. Useful "Signpost" Prizes to 2nd Runners-up.

£100 and "FOOD-PLUS" Prizes for this XWORD



In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square: Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink not pencil.

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

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Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated Jan. 20, and in JOHN BULL, dated Jan. 27, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "Combined," top left-hand corner.

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NAME .....

ADDRESS.....

.....

576

with a hard metallic noise. "But I told you to phone or write."

"Would you rather we went somewhere else? You could say a friend fetched you for a walk, if you don't want to talk here."

"No. We're lucky. The maid's gone. She only comes for a few hours anyhow. Come in."

As she entered the room, Anne had a chance to see Mink clearly and knew at once that she had been right. Mink must never see Simeon.

Mink was wearing a black silk dressing gown that made little noises whenever she moved, and high-heeled pink slippers. "Did you bring the money?"

Anne walked past the girl and across the room where, next to a window, stood an upholstered chair. "May I sit down?"

The girl had followed her. "Yes, of course," she said. "I'm sorry."

She was nervous, Anne saw; she was biting her nails and, seeming to remember that she should not bite them, took her hand from her mouth. Then she crossed her arms in front of her. "You promised in your advertisement . . ." she swallowed, "you promised to pay a thousand dollars to anyone. . . ."

Anne looked round the room at the over-stuffed sofa, the toys, the overloaded dressing-table and the photos of film stars arranged fan-wise on the wall.

"I came to find out if what you wrote is true," she said. "After all, an advertisement like that is answered by many people claiming to be able to prove——"

Mink interrupted her. "I can prove it," she said, rushing to the dressing-table. She came back with a large photograph in a silver frame. "There you are."

A small man, Simeon had said, with a thick mop of fair hair. No special identification marks—just a small man.

"Your husband?"

"No."

"A relative?"

"Do you have to stick your nose into my private affairs?"

Anne shook her head. "But where is he?"

"At the New Gadgets Factory, of course."

"And the address?"

Mink drew back. "What for?"

Anne smiled at her. "Look," she said gently, "a thousand dollars is a huge sum of money to pay. Of course I must make sure that this man is identical with this photo."

"You can't do that!" Mink said, violently. "I told you, didn't I? I don't want to get mixed up in this. He doesn't know that I wrote you, don't you see?"

"I must see him for myself."

"That's not what you said in your advertisement."

Anne stretched out her hand and put it gently on Mink's shoulders. "Try to understand. Nobody is

WRITE TO JOHN BULL ABOUT IT

READERS with personal problems can obtain the help of John Bull's team of experts. Inquiries (other than medical) should be addressed to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Enclose a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

going to spend so much money for something like this without being certain he has the right person."

Mink hadn't thought of that. She had somehow imagined it would be much easier. A short letter, and the coat would be hers. Now, suddenly, she was afraid.

"What is it all about, anyway?" Mink asked. "Why are you so eager to find him? A thousand dollars is nothing to sneeze at, you're quite right. Well, what is it?"

Anne rose and walked slowly up and down the room. She said across her shoulder, "You know, now that I know where he lives, there is nothing to stop me from coming back any time I choose, to make sure he's the man I'm looking for."

Mink had not considered this possibility. She saw herself trapped, without any chance of preventing her visitor from doing just that.

"What do you want?"

"Just the chance to see Slada myself."

"Alone? Is that it?"

"That's it. And I don't want you to tell him about me. I want to take him by surprise."

"What for?"

Anne, she saw suddenly, had some notes in her hand. Mink didn't want to look at them. She tried to look away. But the banknotes turned into fur, little minks, making a whole, soft, shiny coat.

"I'll give you a third of the promised sum now, even though you may be lying," Anne said, "if, for tonight, you'll let me have the key to the entrance door." Simeon, she thought, if he came, must not be seen by that fat woman downstairs. "If you don't, I will see Slada anyhow and show him your letter."

"And if he isn't the man you're looking for?"

"Then you may keep the money for the trouble I caused you."

"Better not come too late. He goes to bed around eleven, regular like the clock. That's why he's so boring."

Anne let her take the money from her. "Why don't you go to a cinema tonight?" she said.

"You want a lot, don't you?"

"I thought it might be less embarrassing for you." She rose. "Well?"

MINK sank her hand into one of the pockets of her dressing-gown. "And when do I get the rest of the money?"

"Tomorrow. You can come to my hotel, the *Pension* Sunbeam. Just ask for me. Let's say early in the afternoon, two o'clock, three—any time you want. My name is Thiolat."

She saw relief in the girl's face, now that she had given her something tangible, a name and an address. Then she felt the little key in her palm, still warm from Mink's body.

"There it is. All right, I'll go out tonight. I'll see you tomorrow, about four o'clock."

Anne went out and down the first few steps, then she ran down the rest of the stairs, ran as if she were running away from something, and didn't stop running until she stood in the street. There were times when she hated herself.

She caught her breath and began to walk more slowly. When she reached the next corner, a man passed her, whistling gaily to himself. He was whistling "Marianne." Anne stopped at the next newspaper stand before she dared look back. An elegantly dressed young man in a neat blue suit with a raincoat slung over his arm. Now he was turning and coming towards her. It was Simeon.

To be continued next week

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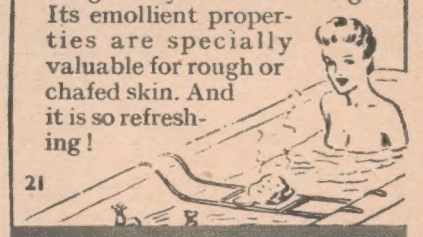

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